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Russia to give Iran 2 more reactors*

LONDON (AFP) — Russia is to supply Iran with two more nuclear reactors to equip a suspected weapons development complex under a secret deal signed recently in Moscow, the Sunday Telegraph reported. "The new deal for two 400 megawatt reactors was struck after a Moscow visit this month by an Iranian delegation," the paper said. It added: "The reactors are destined for the Neka nuclear research complex in Iran's remote northern region (which) is understood by Western intelligence to be part of Iran's research programme to develop its own atomic weapons." Russia has already agreed to provide Iran with a 1,000 megawatt nuclear reactor which is to start installation at Bushehr in the south of the country at the end of the year. The United States tried frantically to scuttle the deal, saying it would enable Tehran's nuclear weapons programme. The conservative Telegraph's rival the Sunday Times, quoting "Western intelligence officials," meanwhile claimed that Iran was receiving help from Russia in developing biological weapons.

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Kuwait arrests 3 Iraqi 'infiltrators'

KUWAIT (R) — A Kuwaiti border patrol arrested two Iraqi soldiers and an Iraqi student for entering the emirate state illegally, a newspaper reported on Sunday. Soldiers Adel Abou Souda, 20, and Qatban Ibrahim, 25, and student Firas Riyad, 19, said they sought asylum in Kuwait or deportation to a third country due to bad living conditions in Iraq, Al Ama newspaper reported. Earlier in August, Kuwaiti troops arrested another group of Iraqi civilians and military personnel for illegal entry. As a result of that infiltration, troops stationed near the border were ordered to intensify monitoring of the frontier.

Sudan: Egypt is 'colonising' Halabja

KHARTOUM (R) — A Khartoum newspaper said on Sunday Egypt was trying to colonise the disputed Halabja triangle on the two countries' border by settling people and building military camps there. Both Cairo and Khartoum claim the largely empty desert area, and the dispute has led to clashes. The state-owned Al Ingaz Al Watani newspaper said Egyptian authorities "settled an unspecified number of Egyptians and set up camps for its soldiers at the Halabja... which aims at colonising the triangle and imposing a de facto political situation."

Rivals fight in Somali capital

MOGADISHU (R) — Somali militiamen fought with artillery, mortars and machine-guns in Mogadishu on Sunday, killing at least six people and wounding 15 in a second straight day of violence. Witnesses said clashes pitted militiamen loyal to faction leader Mohammad Farah Aideed based in south Mogadishu against rivals led by north Mogadishu faction leader Ali Mahdi Mohammad. They said mortar bombs and shells slammed into the disputed Bermuda district on Sunday. Hospital sources reported at least six people were killed and 15 wounded.

Grenade explodes at Iran airport

TEHRAN (AFP) — A grenade exploded at an airport in southwestern Iran on Sunday, injuring one person, the official Iranian news agency IRNA reported. The device went off in a room in the administrative section of Ahvaz airport at 7:00 a.m. (2:30 GMT) before most of the personnel had reported for work, the agency said. An employee of the airport was injured and taken to hospital. At the time of the explosion, which caused "little" damage, some 200 travellers were waiting for their flights in a passenger terminal below the level where the blast occurred. The agency indirectly accused the main armed anti-smoking group, Mujahideen-e-Khalq, for the incident. The group, based in Iraq, "have been responsible for most bombings in Iran," it said. Last week.

Iraq frees 21 Egyptians

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq on Sunday freed 21 Egyptian prisoners arrested for entering the country illegally, the head of the Egyptian interests section in Baghdad said Sunday. The 21, who had been sentenced to between three and eight years in jail, are part of a group of 37 Egyptians pardoned by Iraq since the start of the month, Mr. Reda Nasr told AFP. Some had been held since 1992. Another five were released last week while the remaining 11 would be freed soon, Mr. Nasr said, adding that they would all return to Egypt via Jordan. Mr. Nasr has been quoted in the Egyptian government daily Al Misa as saying that Iraq granted amnesty to 200 prisoners on Aug. 8.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily
جورдан تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة

Russia, Jordan sign cultural accord

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Russia on Sunday signed an executive programme for the implementation of a cultural and scientific cooperation agreement between them for the years 1995 and 1996. Russia's Ambassador to Jordan Alexander Sutanov, who signed the programme with the secretary general of the Ministry of Planning Nabil Ammar, said Jordan and Russia are linked by friendship and cooperation in various fields benefiting the people in both countries. He said that Russia was keen on further promoting these ties. The programme provides for cooperation in education, science, higher education, culture, social development, information, youth, sports, tourism, health and archaeology. According to the ambassador, the two sides agreed on exchanging visits by delegations of university teachers, exchange of information related to education and culture and visits by folkloric troupes and cultural publications. The ambassador said that the two sides will exchange visits by journalists, encourage cooperation between the national news agencies and expertise in social security and in matters related to the status of women.



A Palestinian argues with an Israeli soldier who is preventing him from entering Jericho, which remained under an Israeli army siege on Sunday (Al F photo).

PLO, Israel sign accord on transfer of authority

Both sides hope to conclude final self-rule agreement in September

Jericho remains under siege

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel lifted the ban on Palestinians leaving the West Bank on Sunday but kept a cordon around the autonomous town of Jericho after Palestinian police refused to hand over suspected members of a bombing ring.

The West Bank, which about one million Palestinians live, had been closed since a suicide bomb attack in Jerusalem left five people dead on Aug. 21. About 20,000 Palestinians work in Israel and were barred from their jobs.

Israeli officials said the ongoing closure on Jericho was needed as a security measure because of reports that suspects are hiding in the Palestinian-run town of 10,000.

"We know that there are terrorists in Jericho and others are seeking refuge there, and we also want to ensure that they don't come out to carry out attacks," said

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued on page 7)

House refuses to raise tax exemption for polygamists

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A Lower House of Parliament session that was scheduled to discuss an amended draft income tax law Sunday turned into a heated debate over polygamy after some lawmakers took firm stands against denying husbands tax exemptions for more than one wife.

Islamist deputies had argued sharply over protecting women's rights by demanding that men receive tax exemption for the second, third and/or fourth wives. They said that all wives and all children should be entitled to the same tax-exemption.

"We should take into consideration the reality of our society," said one

member of the House, Toujan Faisal, was backed by the government in her opposition to the proposed amendment.

The views of Ms. Faisal and the government finally prevailed, with only 21 out of 46 deputies present voting in favour of the proposed amendment.

Islamist lawmakers had argued sharply over protecting women's rights by demanding that men receive tax exemption for the second, third and/or fourth wives. They said that all wives and all children should be entitled to the same tax-exemption.

Another IAF deputy, Abdul Aziz Jaber, said polygamy "is an actual reality in the Jordanian society. Why are we trying to deny it? Laws should go hand in hand with our traditions and way of life."

(Continued on page 7)

Israel orders closure of three PNA offices in Arab Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel's police minister signed closure orders on Sunday against three Palestinian offices in Arab East Jerusalem which carry out activities for the self-rule Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Israel Radio said.

Under the 1993 Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace deal, the PNA must restrict its activities to areas under Palestinian self-rule — currently the Gaza Strip and West Bank enclave of Jericho.

The radio said Police Minister Moshe Shahal signed orders giving the Palestinian "statistics ministry, health ministry and broadcasting authority" four days to close their offices in Jerusalem.

The Palestinian National Authority said the move to close the organisations went against the peace process.

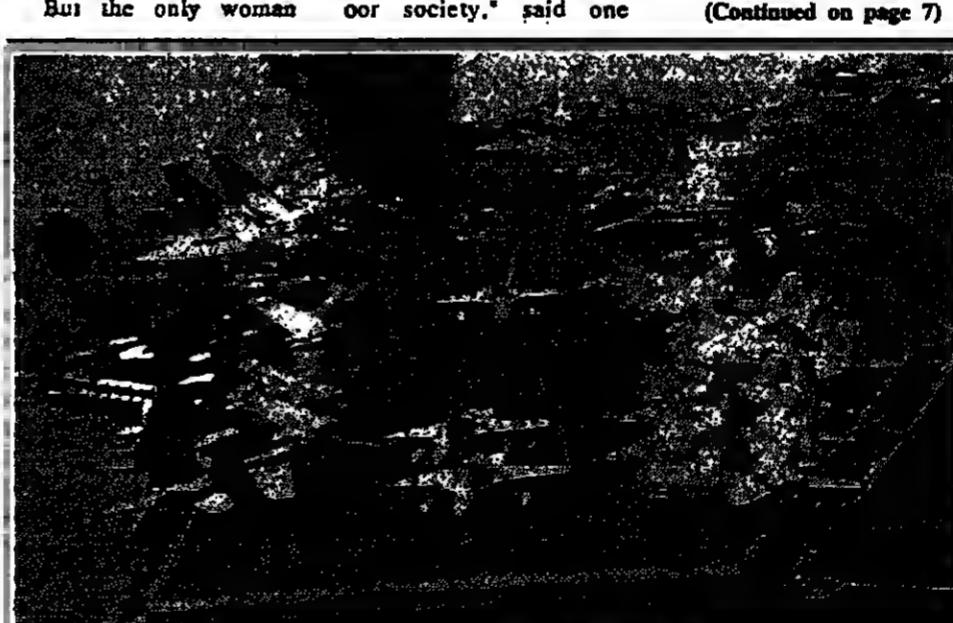
"Everyone knows that closing these institutions will change nothing about the situation in Jerusalem," said Marwan Karanji, spokesman for PLO leader Yasser Arafat, the authority's chairman.

"These offices have been campaigning to shut down Palestinian institutions in the south, the only active Arab-Israeli war front, taking to 126 the number of people killed so far this year in the city," he added without indicating whether they are linked to the Palestinian Authority, the spokesman said.

In their declaration of principles signed in 1993, Israel and the PLO agreed to defer negotiations on the status of Jerusalem until two years after the beginning of Palestinian self-rule. Thus, the negotiations are slated to begin in May 1996.

As part of the declaration of principles, Israel undertook not to undermine the activities of Palestinian institutions in Arab Jerusalem in a letter signed by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and addressed to Mr. Arafat. The letter also pledged to encourage rather than object to Palestinian activities based in Jerusalem.

Only a handful of countries recognise Israel's claim to Jerusalem as the Jewish state's "eternal and indivisible capital." The investigations came after Mr. Shahal called for the



An aerial view of the flight deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln, which is anchored in the northern Gulf in a high state of readiness after what the U.S. described as unusual Iraqi military movements (AFP photo).

Iraq reports 'new policy' towards U.N. demands

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq said Sunday it had adopted a "new policy of cooperation" with U.N. disarmament experts, as prospects dimmed for an early lifting of sanctions.

Baghdad also accused the United States of inventing pretexts to maintain United Nations sanctions placed on Iraq after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The official daily Al Thawra called on the U.N. Security Council to "take the necessary measures" to implement resolutions providing for a lifting of the oil embargo once it is satisfied Iraq has destroyed all its weapons of mass destruction.

Baghdad has adopted "a new policy of cooperation with UNSCOM (the U.N. Special Commission on disarming Iraq) and the head of the commission, Rolf Ekeus, has been informed about the Iraqi arms programme," the paper said.

Washington's ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, said Friday that Iraq was far from securing a lifting of sanctions because its latest revelations raised doubts about its credibility.

Diplomats in New York

But the U.S. administration continues to make false accusations against Iraq and to invent lies in a desperate attempt to deceive the international community," it added.

Mr. Ekeus, who ended a four-day mission to Baghdad a week ago, said Friday that Iraq had given him new information on its past biological and nuclear programmes.

Iraq had invited him to Baghdad to unveil secrets of its weapons programme which it said were concealed by former Industry Minister Hussein Kamel Hassan, who defected to Jordan on Aug. 8.

Washington's ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, said Friday that Iraq was far from securing a lifting of sanctions because its latest revelations raised doubts about its credibility.

In New York, however, diplomats say the upcoming presidential race in the United States, where Iraq and the sale of real estate to Israelis.

(Continued on page 7)

Crown Prince, Peres meet today

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met today to discuss issues related to the finalisation of Jordanian-Israeli agreements on cooperation in trade and transport as well as preparations for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit to be held in Amman in October. Jordanian and Israeli officials said yesterday.

They said the meetings, expected to be held in Aqaba, will also cover plans to upgrade the Aqaba airport to serve visitors to Jordan as well as Israel. Under an agreement signed in May in line with their Oct. 26 peace treaty, Jordan and Israel have agreed to offer joint tour packages to visitors.

Negotiating committees have drawn up draft agreements on transports and trade, and it is expected that today's meetings would give the final shape to the accords. There are some problems hindering the finalisation, but we hope that these could be overcome," said a Jordanian source.

Mr. Peres will be accompanied to the meetings by Minister of Transport Yisrael Kesser as well as the head of the Israeli civil aviation authority in addition to negotiators. The Jordanian side is expected to include Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and other ministers and officials concerned with the proposed agreements in transport and trade.

Also expected to attend are the Jordanian and Israeli heads of a joint committee entrusted with supervising the implementation of the peace treaty.

When finalised, the agreement on transport will allow the entry of Jordanian and Israeli vehicles across to the borders of the two countries and will also have in place a firm accord on the use of airspace.

Royal Jordanian, the Kingdom's national carrier, started using Israeli airspace for its flights to and from Europe since April under an interim agreement that allowed RJ planes to fly at a maximum altitude of 17,000 feet. However, negotiators are seeking to increase the permitted altitude so as to make better benefit in terms of fuel and flying time.

The accord on transport will also complement the agreement on trade since it would allow Jordanian vehicles to carry goods directly across the border to their Israeli destinations and vice-versa.

The draft accord on cooperation in trade was drawn up after Israel dropped an insistence that the document should commit Jordan into entering a free trade accord with the Jewish state. There are still a few minor points left to be worked out," a Jordanian source said last week.

The way for signing the trade and transport agreements were clear when Parliament last month adopted legislation that effectively nullified laws that banned any form of trade or other dealings with Israel and the sale of real estate to Israelis.

(Continued on page 7)

Rabbani forces advance against Taliban militia

KABUL (Agencies) — Afghan government forces have driven Taliban fighters from part of the town of Girishk, 110 kilometres from the main Taliban stronghold of Kandahar in southern Afghanistan, a spokesman said.

President Borhanuddin Rabbani's defence spokesman, known as Dr. Abdullah, said government troops had pushed into Girishk, in Helmand province, on Saturday. He had no word on casualties.

Independent sources on Kandahar confirmed that part of Girishk had fallen to pro-Rabbani forces.

Dr. Abdullah told reporters government troops would attack Kandahar once Girishk was fully under their control.

"When we start to attack Kandahar we think there will be an internal uprising in support of the government," he said.

Pro-Rabbani forces launched an offensive against the Taliban on Wednesday with an attack on the town of Delaram, 270 kilometres south of the government-held city of Herat, ending a two-month-old unofficial ceasefire.

Since then they have pushed the Taliban 120 kilometres to Girishk on the border between Helmand and Kandahar provinces.

The Taliban emerged from obscurity 10 months ago, capturing Kandahar from discredited guerrilla warlords and advancing through several provinces to threaten Kabul.

It is estimated that at least 25,000 people, most of them civilians, have been killed in bitter factional fighting since Muslim insurgents threw out the communists from power in April 1992.

Talibans demand meeting

The Taliban have demanded that a conference with U.N. participation be held in southern Afghanistan to discuss the fate of seven Russian airmen held hostage in Kandahar, a Russian diplomat said on Sunday.

The militia also wants Russian assurances it will not interfere in internal Afghan affairs, said Zamir Kabulov, a counsellor at the Russian embassy in Islamabad.

Sepakting by telephone from Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, he said he had failed to his latest visit to Kandahar to win the release of the seven men who have been held since Aug. 3 when the Taliban militia forced their Ulyushin-76 cargo plane carrying ammunition to land.

Trans Avia, an air company staffed mainly by Russians and which arranged the chartering of the Tatarstan-based Aerostan plane by the Afghan government, is based in Sharjah.

"They (Talibans) want us to organise some international conference in Kandahar... (attended by) a U.N. representative — maybe Mr. Mesri, someone from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference, plus me, plus a Tatarstan delegate," Mr. Kahulov said.

Harry Wu criticises Israel for military relations with China

TEL AVIV (AP) — Harry Wu, the human rights activist released from Chinese detention, criticised Israel on Sunday for its military cooperation with Beijing and called on the government to stop "dealing with evil."

Interviewed on Israeli Radio, Mr. Wu said Israel had made "a very, very bad decision" and should withhold support because the Chinese government was putting people in concentration camps just like the Nazis did.

"If the Israeli people are really concerned about concentration camps, concerned about the Nazi fascists, they must say to the Chinese regime is depending on Israel and would crumble if it withdrew its support."

Israeli officials have re-

fused to comment on persistent foreign reports that Israel is selling weapons and military technology to China, including the upgrade of Chinese tanks.

Israel and China established diplomatic relations in 1992, and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who is also the defence minister, and the army chief of staff have visited Beijing.

"This looks so good the British will never notice the difference," boasts the man as he discusses departure plans with friends in the Maradee market.

Mr. Wu, 58, was arrested June 19 while trying to enter China at a remote border crossing and later sentenced to 15 years in prison and expulsion on charges of espionage. It was his fifth trip there since 1991 to document human rights abuses in the country's extensive prison labour camps.

Iran accuses Europeans of not helping it in drug war

NICOSIA (AP) — A leader of Iran's anti-narcotics campaign was quoted Sunday as criticising European countries for not helping that campaign, which he claimed was intercepting large amounts of drugs destined for those states.

Instead, noted Mohammad Fallah, European authorities "have adopted a hostile attitude and exert political pressure on us," he was quoted as saying in Sunday's edition of the English-language Tehran daily, Iran News.

"Iran is playing a crucial role in blocking the flow of drugs to Europe," said Mr. Fallah, secretary of the national anti-drug campaign.

"Last year we confiscated 25 tonnes of morphine destined for that continent, but we expect the Europeans to cooperate with us."

Despite the lack of cooperation, he said, Iran will follow the teachings of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, "who said that the salvation of one addict is the salvation of mankind."

He vowed that Iran's anti-narcotics offensive, launched in December 1988, will continue, noting "this is a complicated and sensitive task and is best carried out with multi-national cooperation."

Over the last eight years, Iranian authorities have arrested thousands of narcotics smugglers and dealers, executing more than 1,000 in public hangings. Several hundred security personnel have been killed in gun battles with armed bands of smugglers.

Hundreds of thousands of addicts have been rounded up and thrown into special harsh-regime rehabilitation camps.

Thousands of tonnes of heroin, opium, morphine and other narcotics, much of it from neighbouring Afghanistan and Pakistan, have been seized, according to Iranian authorities.

Last year, the U.S. State Department accused Iran of allowing its territory to be used as a "major point" of transit for South Asian heroin destined for the United States and Europe.

Iran denied that and U.N. drug control officials conceded that the Islamic republic

was making a determined effort to halt the flood of drugs through its territory.

Mr. Fallah said Iran was also trying to stop drug trafficking by buying wheat at high prices from farmers in Afghanistan to encourage them to grow the crop instead of opium.

Mr. Fallah said farmers in Afghanistan produced 5,000 tonnes of opium annually.

A United Nations Drug Control Programme survey says Afghanistan produces more opium than any other country, much of it in remote tribal regions close to the border with Iran.

Mr. Fallah said Iran's President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani "made public a sweeping plan through which he offered attractive and useful incentives to the Afghan farmers for substitute farming."

"As an incentive to Afghan farmers to produce wheat instead of opium... Rafsanjani has offered to purchase wheat from Afghan farmers..." at triple the price paid to Iranian wheat farmers.

"Actually, the plan is currently being implemented in Afghanistan's heart province..." Mr. Fallah said in the interview.

Slapstick play offers rare laugh in Baghdad

President Saddam and everything he loves.

Mr. Sarig had one play shut by the government because it criticised schoolteachers.

He remains unfazed, saying his next play will be entitled, "The Minister's Party," and will focus on official corruption.

His current play is tame in political terms, but it shows the modern, secular side of Baghdad that is often overlooked amid its problems with the United States and other Western countries.

The young men of the market dress in blue jeans and greet each other by slapping high-fives. The women flirt, shake their hips when they walk and speak in double entendres.

The market gossip moves from the poor quality of government-rationed flour to the merits of leaving Iraq for the West.

"The people of London have never loved an Arab and they never will," one middle-aged man tells his nephew, an artist determined to seek his freedom abroad.

The slapstick gives the play mass appeal and draws an audience made up mostly of families. Children break into laughter at the rotund man who sells water is insulted time and again, then chases down a nemesis half his size.

The characters magically appear in London in the second act, and complications ensue.

One Iraqi explains that he was detained by airport police after they asked if he had any explosives. He answered with the only English word he knew: "Yes."

The men discover whiskey, which they like all too well. They are shocked — and intrigued — when they see men and women touch in public. In a jah at the rich Arabs of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the poor Iraqis ask a wealthy sheikh for a loan, only to be rejected.

In the end, they decide it's best to head back to Iraq.

"A drop of water in Iraq is worth a mountain of gold in a foreign land," says one character.

[A simple message, perhaps, but the audience approves with a standing ovation.

Announcement

Entries for the Theory Examination of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music will be accepted until Thursday 31 August 1995. The Theory examination will be held on Saturday, November 4, 1995.

For registration and further information please contact the local representative:

The National Music Conservatory / Noor Al Hussein Foundation
Jabel Amman, Atiyat Building, Behind the Embassy of Kuwait
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Bus ride in Israel becomes a paranoid trip

Agence France Presse

TEL AVIV — After seven militant attacks on buses in 16 months, causing 73 dead and hundreds injured, fewer Israelis are mustering the courage to take public transportation.

Those who have no choice but to take the bus find the trip filled with anxiety and paranoid stares.

Carrying sacks full of groceries, Mansur Siman-Tov silently takes his seat on bus number six in Jerusalem. The other passengers cast a suspicious eye at the 70-year-old retiree.

"It's always the same thing after an attack. My sacks cause panic on the bus. People think my potatoes are bombs," he said.

Every trip provokes fear, says Michele Lindenman, 57, who takes the bus almost daily to a jewellery store where she is a saleswoman. "I'm playing cat-and-mouse with death," she said.

Ms. Lindenman changes lines frequently or quickly

gets off a bus if there is a face she does not recognise.

The national bus cooperative Egged said its passenger load has fallen 20 per cent since April 6, 1994. That was the day a Palestinian suicide bomber rammed a car full of explosives into a bus in the northern town of Afula, killing eight Israelis.

The last attack, on Aug. 21 in occupied Jerusalem, killed four passengers when a Palestinian militant opposed to peace with Israel blew himself up on board line 26.

The latest bombing prompted the United States to warn its citizens on Friday to avoid using public transportation, especially buses and bus stops, in Israel and Gaza.

According to a poll taken by the Maariv daily newspaper after the attack, 29 per cent of Israelis interviewed said they were trying to avoid taking the bus. 52 per cent said they would continue to do so and 19 per cent said they never

took the bus.

The repeated attacks have caused a heightened sense of panic, according to Guiora Keinan, a psychologist at Tel Aviv University.

He said he has treated numerous people suffering from "bus phobia" over the last few months. For example, one individual walks 10 kilometres (six miles) to work and back since a bus attack in Tel Aviv in October 1994 that left 22 dead.

"Some have become unable to look at a bus, even in films, or come near them," Mr. Keinan said.

"It's a natural and human fear, and bringing it out helps to overcome it," he added.

Dozens of worried bus passengers fled behind a coffin Friday in Jerusalem to protest against Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who have continued talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) despite the wave of attacks.

The bombings have sparked a fiery debate in Israel about how much force to use in the interrogation of Palestinian suspects, especially after the two believed behind the August 21 attack had been in Israeli police custody only two days earlier.

"Rabin-Peres, take a

bus,

like the rest of us," one of their signs read.

The bombings have been claimed by Palestinian militant groups, such as the Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, that are trying to derail an Israeli-PLO accord to fully establish Palestinian self-rule in Jericho, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

But it was only with the use of tougher techniques that the service was able to get one of its prisoners to reveal the identities of the two Palestinians who organised the August 21 suicide bombing, police officials said.

Menahem Schwartz,

a bus driver on line six,

is fatalistic about efforts to stop the suicide attacks.

"In any case, there is nothing that can be done," he said. "Who knows if that young person sitting gently on the bench is not a crazy person that will transform my bus into a torn up mess of metal."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 .. Animals of Farthing Wood

14:30 .. Hoy Day

15:00 .. Survival

17:00 .. Families

17:30 .. Children's programme — Rahah

18:00 .. Orama — Le Meilleur Du Silence

18:15 .. French Varieties

18:30 .. News Headlines

19:35 .. Michael's Navy

20:00 .. The Bold and the Beautiful

21:15 .. Hearts of the West

22:25 .. News in English

The Ruth Rendell's Mystery

Film: "Marmic"

23:25 ..

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Civil Defence Immediate

Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Civil Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630261

Hotel Complaints 605800

Police Complaints 661176

Prime minister calls for establishing official administrative training units

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday issued a communique to all government departments with instructions for the creation of units for the administrative development and training of civil servants.

These administrative and training units are to conduct studies and surveys on identifying department needs, establishing plans and programmes for training employees and supervising the implementation of these

programmes, the communique stated.

The creation of these units are needed for the implementation of His Majesty King Hussein's directives to the government to help develop public administration services and functions, the Prime Minister was quoted as saying in his circular.

The communique followed a cabinet meeting which endorsed a system through which some of the Prime Minister's authorities would

be referred to ministers, especially in matters related to the transfer of employees to other departments, sending employees to work abroad, and sending employees on scholarships and training courses.

In another statement following the cabinet meeting, the government endorsed an allowance to dentists employed by the Health Ministry at the rate of 100 per cent of their basic salaries.

The cabinet also formed

Jordan's position in Beijing to be based on Islamic faith, Arab traditions, says Princess Basma

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan's position at the World Conference on Women, opening in Beijing Sept. 4, is based on Islamic faith and Arab traditions of defining the family as the basic unit of society, and as provided for in the National Strategy on Women, the Jordanian Constitution, and the National Charter, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma said Sunday.

Addressing a press conference at the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF), the Princess said that the Jordanian delegation, comprising government and non-governmental organisations, agree on two important issues: active participation in all conference activities and the coordination of positions with other Arab and Islamic delegations at the conference.

Princess Basma, who is leading the Jordanian delegation to Beijing, said the delegation will re-affirm Jordan's absolute commitment to all international resolutions and covenants on women.

She said that Jordan's position at the conference conforms with all broadlines contained within the international draft document prepared by the United Nations, and in particular supports



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday addresses a press conference at Queen Alia Fund premises to announce Jordan's position regarding issues to be discussed at the U.N. conference on women in Beijing (Reuters photo)

the clause that underlines the need for equality between men and women.

In her press conference convened to expound Jordan's position in Beijing, the

Princess stressed that the Kingdom is aware of and deeply concerned over the question of poverty which, she said, has direct negative effects on women.

This awareness motivates Jordan to call for cooperation between rich and poor countries to ensure investments that create jobs, and curtail unemployment and poverty, the Princess said.

The Princess also said that she will speak on the Kingdom's drive to offer equal and non-discriminatory opportunities to men and women and in efforts to eradicate illiteracy.

The delegation will outline the Kingdom's endeavours and achievements in providing health services, spreading public health awareness, and establishing primary care and mother and child health services.

The Princess said that the delegation will stress the rights of women in decision-making at all levels, in the contribution through peaceful means to the settlement of disputes, in ending racial discrimination and in ensuring women's rights to equal pay and treatment in all occupations.

Israeli embassy says no change in visa regulations for Jordanians

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Israeli embassy here on Sunday denied that it had changed regulations concerning the issuance of visas to stem what reports in the Israeli and Palestinian press have described as a flow of Jordanians to the Jewish state in search of work.

"There has been no change in the regulations since we started issuing visas on Aug. 1," said a spokesman for the embassy.

"We issue visas to groups for tourism purposes as well as for businessmen and people who wish to visit Israel for professional reasons, such as journalists," the spokesman told the Jordan Times.

The embassy also issues visas for "emergency purposes" in the event of a death in the family or for pressing medical treatment at Israeli hospitals, the spokesman added.

The denial came amid reports carried by Israeli and Palestinian newspapers that as many as 3,000 Jordanian passport holders were staying in Israel or in the occupied territories although their visas had expired.

The Hebrew-language Ma'ariv daily said 11,300 Jordanians had crossed the border in May and June but only 9,300 had returned to Jordan.

Other newspapers, including Israel's Yedioth Ahronot as well as two Palestinian dailies, reported in the past months that dozens of Jordanians were expelled across the border after they were found to have overstayed visas.

Jordanian officials have denied the reports. The Ministry of Labour also rejected reports that Jordanians were seeking jobs in Israel and that Israel had approached the Jordanian government with a request for Jordanian workers.

According to Ma'ariv, the Israeli ministry of interior is now allowing the issuance of only one-month visas for Jordanian tourists to Israel. Previously the period of stay was three months.

However, the embassy spokesman here said the period of stay was decided on the basis of the time Jordanians intended to remain in Israel as part of tour groups.

"They have to go in a group and return in the same group," said the spokesman.

About the reported overstays, the spokesman said he had also heard of the reports, but that the embassy had no specific figures or details of the affair.

The spokesman noted that although

the embassy was opened in December, nearly two months after the signing of the Oct. 26 Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, the mission did not start issuing visas until August.

In the meantime, it helped facilitate the issuance of visas and entry permits by the Israeli ministry of interior for businessmen, professionals and "emergency" visitors.

According to community sources, many of the Jordanian visitors to Israel are of Palestinian origin with families and relatives in the occupied West Bank, and, in the face of an Israeli refusal to grant them residence permits in the occupied territory, they opt to stay on despite the expiry of the visa.

"However, it is unlikely that they are in the thousands," said one source. "First of all, Israel does not issue visas easily to people of Palestinian origin. Every application filed from Amman (before the embassy started issuing visas) used to be thoroughly checked and the applicant was closely screened."

"Israelis would not admit it, but this used to be the case," added the source. As such, he said, not many Jordanians of Palestinian origin could have made their way to the West Bank and decided to stay on there.

EXHIBITIONS

* Abstract art by the late artist Adnan Hilu at the Royal Cultural Centre.
* Oil paintings by Yassin Al Mohammadawi at Baladna Art Gallery.
* Paintings by "Pioneers of the Fifties" Isma'il and Suzanne Al Sheikly, Khalid Qassab, and Dr. Nuri Behjet at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Utheina.

U.S. academic discusses UJ department organisation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Executive Vice-President of Texas Technology University (TTU) Donald Haragan Sunday ended a week-long visit to the University of Jordan (UJ) to offer suggestions and recommendations on the reformation of academic disciplines and departments.

Paying the visit at the request of UJ Vice-President for Academic Affairs Mohammad Maqusi, Dr. Haragan discussed the organisation of university departments and guest centres.

UJ President Fawzi Gharibeh also attended the meetings.

Dr. Haragan said that the reformative process is required at UJ in order to increase the quality of academic programmes and at the same time to increase the operative efficiency of these programmes, especially in the face of UJ's declining resources and facilities.

Petra gets specialised cleaning services

Standards of hygiene imperative with influx of tourists

By Ghala Abu Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A private company will carry out cleaning works at the Nabatean city of Petra as of the beginning of September this year, a Ministry of Tourism official said Sunday.

The official told the Jordan Times that the local company, MEDCO, has won a bid to maintain the cleanliness of the red rose city of Petra and adjacent facilities, which include the service centres.

Specialised cleaning services became imperative in light of the increased volume of tourists visiting Jordan's world-famous ancient city about 290 kilometres south of Amman, the official said.

Established norms and procedures will be followed to supervise the company's work and ensure that it is keeping the city, famous for its treasury carved in the rock, clean for visitors, said the official.

Petra, the mainstay of Jordan's tourism industry, attracts thousands of Jordanian visitors and foreign tourists throughout the year.

The number of tourists visiting Petra has substantially increased since the signing of the peace treaty with Israel last year.

This sudden upsurge in the number of visitors has put more pressure on the city's touristic sites and facilities, necessitating their improvement and expansion.

The private sector, with an eye on the high return expected on investment in the tourism sector, is committing millions of dinars to the industry.

Jordan is pinning strong hopes on the growth of the tourism sector, which in

WHAT'S GOING ON

DARAT AL FUNUN SUMMER '95 EXHIBITIONS

* Works of graphic art by several artists.
* Photography show "Elements in Harmony" by Hala Hodieb.
* Display of painted stone and steel, "Embargo Art" by Iraqi artist Nuha Al Radi.
* "Early Morning Scribbles" by Lebanese artist Amin Al Basha and Jordanian artist Rajwa Bint Ali and "Late Night Scribbles" by Amin Al Basha and artist Ali Bermamat.
* Sculpture by Rajwa Bint Ali.

3-D experiments in calligraphy by Usama Khalidi.

"Maybe I'll come back." Looking for alternate means of expression, Ms. Radi aimed to reflect an expression which she would elaborate on to maintain a sense of reality, and it is through these objects that she gives shape to her world.

The objects mainly reflect people, different sorts of people handled by the artist with deep affection. Although dressed up colourfully, they never fail to exhibit their shabby and miserable appearance, a fair and apt reflection of real circumstances.

The stone and metal statues have a life of their own but they lack something very essential: Security. They seem threatened. They are fragile, ready to fall apart at any moment, yet they carry on their daily life, get married, have children, observe beauty and die. Life goes on irrespective of the hard conditions, as inevitable as death.

Ms. Radi's world, absurd as it may seem, is real. Its reality comes from the fact that the uncertainty which characterises those human beings, does not simply reflect the present, it retains a long history as well. In Baghdad, subjected to the injustice caused by the sanctions, Ms. Radi searched for fresh materials which she came across only by chance. It was in scrap metal that she discovered the possibility of developing



Metal scrap people in colourful tones. The artist uses the strong contrast of metal and colour to create thematic tension.

Stone faces, scrap metal bodies, and an art about human suffering

By May Muzaffar Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The world created by Nuha Radi, as displayed in an exhibition in the lush gardens of Darat Al Funun, Jebel Weibdeh, is undoubtedly a mixture of contemplated thought and fantasy.

The artist's work, created through the use of stone and scrap metal, is laid out in randomly but strategically chosen areas of the gardens at Darat Al Funun.

Parliamentarians head for New York

Amman (Petra) — A parliamentary delegation headed by Senator Leila Sharaf Sunday left for New York to take part in the extraordinary session of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU), which will be held there on Aug. 30.

Heatwave to continue until Monday

Amman (Petra) — The heat wave currently affecting the country will continue until Monday, according to Meteorology Department sources. The sources said temperatures today will reach 36 degrees Celsius in Amman.

Jordan, Syria discuss trade relations

Damascus (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb Sunday discussed with his Syrian counterpart Mohammed Al Imadi here means of bolstering bilateral trade relations and enhancing commercial exchange. Mr. Abul Ragheb said he reviewed with Mr. Imadi commercial protocols and minutes of meetings signed by Jordanian and Syrian officials. Mr. Abul Ragheb is currently in Syria to chair the Jordanian side to the meetings of the Jordanian-Syrian Trade Committee, which started here late Sunday. The committee will discuss the mechanisms of the economic agreements between both countries.

KET PRICES

Amman (Petra) — The price of kerosene per litre for domestic consumption is 100 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for industrial consumption is 120 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for agricultural consumption is 130 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for export is 140 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for import is 150 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for export is 160 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for import is 170 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for export is 180 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for import is 190 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for export is 200 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for import is 210 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for export is 220 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for import is 230 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for export is 240 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for import is 250 dinars. The price of kerosene per litre for export is 260 dinars. 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Fresh fighting erupts in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (AFP) — Fresh fighting erupted in eastern Sri Lanka Sunday as elite police commandos moved against jungle bases of Tamil Tiger guerrillas triggering heavy gun battles, official sources said.

The Special Task Force (STF) commandos carried out attacks in the Batticaloa district against the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a day after the rebels attacked an STF jungle base in the region, the sources said.

There were no immediate reports of casualties in Sunday's fighting but on Saturday the STF claimed to have killed at least 36 rebels for the loss of six of its own men, including an officer. Eleven STF constables were wounded.

Security forces recovered 24 LTTE bodies while ground troops confirmed that rebels had removed at least 12 more bodies. The military claimed that the rebel casualties could be higher.

The failed bid to attack the STF camp was the latest setback suffered by the rebels, who lost more than 300 fighters in an attack against the main Weli Oya military base in the northeast.

Diplomats said government forces had apparently prepared an elaborate plan

Meanwhile, thousands of people in Sri Lanka's beleaguered north face hunger due to a standoff between the Red Cross and the government ahead of a widely expected army offensive against the Tamil rebel stronghold, officials said Sunday.

A rebel radio broadcast by the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said a U.N. observer was discussing the food emergency with guerrilla leaders on the stronghold on the Jaffna peninsula in the north.

Three-hundred-thousand people are threatened by the month-old food crisis, brought on by the suspension of food shipments after the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) refused to escort government vessels because of safety fears.

An official quoted the government agent in Jaffna as saying: "There is no more food in government stores."

Jaffna government agent K. Ponnampalam last week appealed directly to President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga to intervene in the dispute.

Diplomats said government forces had apparently prepared an elaborate plan

for a major assault on Jaffna, headquarters of Tiger chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, before the next rainy season, due in less than two months.

They were, however, divided on seeing a link between the suspension of food supplies to Jaffna and the government's war strategy.

"If people starve, more and more of them will join the LTTE war effort," a diplomat told Reuters. "It doesn't make sense for the government to deliberately cut food supplies to Jaffna."

Others said the suspension of food shipments to the northern region had enabled Colombo to pressure the Tigers to open two strategic land routes.

If the LTTE is interested in ensuring that the people they are seeking to "liberate" are adequately fed... why do they keep the land route through Elephant Pass and Ponneriy blocked?" said the pro-government Daily News Sunday.

Senior Tiger commanders, bracing for the government offensive, have fanned out across the peninsula, setting up roadblocks and ringing their positions with mines, diplomats said.

"They don't appear to be

planning to open any road for the troops," a diplomat said.

The ICRC, which had been protecting six ships transporting a monthly average of 10,000 tonnes of supplies provided by the government for Jaffna civilians, says it was forced to suspend operations after its own ship hit a mine.

Regular supplies of essential food and medicines have dried up since the end of July while the ICRC clarified security guarantees for ICRC-protected ships from the Tigers and government forces.

It says it is prepared to escort ships to the Tiger-controlled Point Pedro on the Jaffna peninsula, but not to the government-controlled port of Kankesanturai where the armed forces want it to unload supplies.

The ICRC has security guarantees for Point Pedro from the Tigers, fighting for a homeland in the north and east, but not for Kankesanturai, where a mine sank an ICRC vessel earlier this year, killing an Indonesian crew member.

In subsequent revival of operations to Point Pedro sparked allegations of a pro-Tiger bias, denied by the ICRC.



Employees of the Beijing International Convention Centre (BICC) arrange the United Nations flag at the head of national flags of U.N. member countries. The U.N.'s Fourth World Conference on Women will open at the BICC on Sept. 4 (AFP photo)

Women arrive in China for NGO forum

BEIJING (Agencies) —

Hundreds of Chinese workers in pink shirts welcomed thousands of women arriving Sunday to a grassroots forum in Beijing, but customs forced one human rights group to tear a cartoon of Deng Xiaoping out of a book.

Organisers estimated about 2,000 people were arriving in Beijing Sunday for the non-governmental organisation (NGO) forum on women that begins Wednesday in suburban Hainan, transformed from a sleepy tourist town in the shadow of the Great Wall to frantic host for nearly 30,000 women.

"The Chinese are trying their best," NGO convenor Supatra Masdit told Reuters. "They give it to everything we request. We never expected this, it is a lot better than I expected."

Hundreds of English-speaking student volunteers, identifiable by their pastel pink shirts, struggled to help women pouring off flights into Beijing's capital airport.

"How do I get to my hotel?" "How much do I have to pay?" "Please write down for me the address of my hotel in Chinese" were some of the appeals from women arriving from Nigeria, Spain and Britain.

For most women, the biggest problem at the airport was a shortage of baggage carts.

For the organising committee of the People's Decade For Human Rights Education, the problem was customs.

Customs officials spent two hours sifting through the 16 boxes of materials group members had brought for their forum workshop, removed sample leaflets and hauled at a book with a cartoon caricature of Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.

"They looked at it, and looked at it and found a

picture of a cartoon of a Chinese dictator, saying 'no human rights here.' They were very offended," executive director Shulamith Koenig said in an interview.

"I told them I will not leave until I get my book back. I tore the page out and gave it to them and they let me go with my book," she said.

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Depardieu wins prize at Montreal Film Festival

MONTREAL (AFP) — French actor Gerard Depardieu was awarded the Grand Prix Des Amériques at the Montreal Film Festival for his contribution to cinema. Depardieu, who just completed work on his latest movie Bogus, starring U.S. actress Whoopi Goldberg and directed by Canadian filmmaker Norman Jewison, was given the prestigious prize for his "exceptional contribution" to film. The French actor told a news conference prior to the award ceremony that he did not disapprove of American "remakes" of European movies and declined to lambast Hollywood for producing film works that have mass appeal. "European cinema is going strong and it will continue to grow," he said. "But I am not sure that I understand what is meant by 'European cinema.' When we are making a movie, the money comes from everywhere including the United States, as do the actors and the creative cast," he said.

Toddler survives crack cocaine overdose

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (R) — A two-year-old girl swallowed a stone of crack cocaine, but was recovering from the overdose in hospital, police said Saturday. The toddler was no longer in critical condition and was moved out of an intensive care unit where she had been since police found her suffering seizures Tuesday in Texarkana. Detectives were investigating how she obtained the drug. "We're surmising the child found a rock of crack cocaine and swallowed it," a Texarkana police spokeswoman said. The girl's mother left her in the care of a relative while she went to a hair salon, she said. No one has been arrested.

On the stadium floor, performers grouped to form the Chinese characters "Beijing" and the English letters "NGO."

Among the few unhappy voices were Beijing's ubiquitous water melon sellers. They have been banned from the streets during the conference, the Beijing Evening News said.

Meanwhile, the upcoming U.N. conference on women has proved to be a political obstacle course for U.S. President Bill Clinton, not only abroad with sensitive Sino-U.S. relations, but also back home with the so-called "relicious right."

Following the return to the United States of Chinese-American human rights activist Harry Wu, the administration gave the green light for first lady Hillary Clinton to attend the conference — despite objections from Republican critics.

Yet the couple, on vacation in the western state of Wyoming, found themselves fending off attacks not on the foreign policy front, but closer to home.

Religious conservatives, and Republican candidates who are hoping to court their support, criticise the conference as a left-wing attack on "traditional values," a meeting that will promote practices such as abortion.

James Dobson, head of the conservative Focus on the Family group, called the U.N. meeting "the most radical, atheistic and anti-family crusade in the history of the world."

Hugh Grant taunts end in brawl

LONDON (AP) — Hugh Grant left a trendy London cafe spattered with another man's blood after a brawl that began with teasing about his recent encounter with a prostitute, a newspaper reported Sunday. In the incident on Aug. 12, drunken youths taunted the star of Four Weddings And A Funeral with jokes about his recent no-contest plea to indecent behaviour, the News Of The World said. Los Angeles Police arrested Grant and prostitute Stella Mae Thompson on Sunset Boulevard last month. The youths shouted out "Hugh rat!" and "is your wine Divine?" the paper quoted staff and regulars at Mas Cafe in the gentrified Notting Hill area as saying. Thompson's alias is Divine Brown.

"When the abuse started, he ignored it as best he could, but his smile got a hit forced," customer Patrick Sturgis told the News Of The World. When Grant tried to leave, two youths tried to block his exit, swinging at him, the newspaper said. He escaped unharmed, but blood from a cut another man suffered in the free-for-all splattered on him, it said. The cafe declined to press charges, the News Of The World quoted its management as saying, because the attackers were regulars.

"Hugh's an easy target, but I'm sure he's been through worse," the paper quoted the manager, identified only as Anna, as saying.

Reynolds, C. — born to be Feral

LONDON (AP) — What kind of a man dances with wolves? A wild thing. A playboy playmate told a British newspaper that Kevin Costner used the name "Tom Feral" when she met him for a liaison at a Sydney hotel recently. Bridget Bloxham met the Dances With Wolves star at a night club when he was in Australia to promote his most recent film, Waterworld, the News Of The World said Sunday. Costner told her to call him at a registered under the name Tom Feral. The term Feral refers to a once-domesticated animal that has gone back to the wild. Costner recently separated from his wife, Cindy, reportedly because of an affair he had with a Hawaiian dancer while he was on the Waterworld set.

The prime minister told the parliamentary party meeting that members should highlight the pro-poor emphasis of his administration, a theme is becoming one of his major campaign planks.

The issue also gave him a chance to rebut Sonia Gandhi's speech.

"He stressed that the government had not deviated from the policy of the party, laid down by Nehru and pursued by Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, namely upliftment of the poorer sections," the party statement said.

Witnesses said the men who fired at the four foreigners with assault rifles were all uniformed.

According to police sources, three road blocks were erected Saturday night in the area around the towering monument in downtown Phnom Penh to control access to the house of Cambodia's Second Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Mr. Hun Sen lives across from the monument which sits in the centre of a major roundabout.

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Burma asks Thais to cut support for opium king

RANGOON (R) — Burma's military is closing in on Shan opium warlord Khun Sa in the Golden Triangle but neighbouring Thailand must cut border support for the trafficker if he is to be finally crushed, a senior military official told Reuters.

"It seems we are alone in the fight against narcotics and Khun Sa. We told the Thais and the U.S. to get him from the Thai side. If they are seriously interested in eradicating the problem they must help us finish him," Colonel Kyaw Win, deputy director of the Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence, said in an interview late Friday.

"Our number one enemy Khun Sa will fall quickly only if the Thais cut off logistics lines helping him along their border," he added.

"We believe the Thai government is sincere in wanting to get rid of the problem, but in the remote border areas where it has little influence there are corrupt civil and military officials who are helping Khun Sa," he said.

Burmese military officers claim Khun Sa's rebels injured in battles with their troops have been given access to medical attention in Thai border hospitals despite Thai military checkpoints.

India cautious on talks with Kashmir militants

SRINAGAR, India (R) — Indian authorities said Sunday that talk with guerrillas holding four Westerners hostage in Kashmir were progressing well, but indicated they thought the eight-week ordeal might continue.

An official spokesman in Srinagar, the summer capital of India's Jammu and Kashmir state, told Reuters Sunday morning that contact with the shadowy Al Faran militant group had been made within the preceding 24 hours.

"We are cautiously hopeful," the spokesman said. "In a given situation, one has to look at either the optimistic or pessimistic side. We're looking at the brighter side."

But the two sides would still need some time to narrow differences, he said.

Authorities said a tape recording and photographs of the captive tourists, along with continued contacts through unidentified intermediaries, had raised hopes Al Faran militants might release the men unharmed.

American Donald Hutchings, German Dirk Hasert and Britons Keith Mangan and Paul Wells said they had "no problems" and told their female companions they loved them on a tape recording dated Aug. 18.

But officials who released the audio cassette along with five black-and-white photographs, said they did not intend to ask for fresh proof that the captives were still alive.

"We have reason to believe that the hostages are safe," the official spokesman said, but he gave no details.

Abducted in remote Kashmir early in July, the hostages were unkempt but seemingly healthy in the photographs. On the tape, their voices were clear and strong.

Al Faran, which originally

Liberia's warring parties observe new truce

MONROVIA (R) — Liberia's latest peace accord appeared to be taking root Sunday after a ceasefire came into force and officials said the warring factions had been observing it well in advance.

The ceasefire, which took effect from midnight Saturday, was the key element of the accord signed by leaders of all Liberia's warring factions in the Nigerian capital Abuja last Sunday to try to end more than five years of civil war.

A military delegation from Ghana, whose President Jerry Rawlings helped broker the peace accord, visited the towns of Buchanan, Kakata and Tubmanburg Saturday to assess the situation.

Burma's military officers claim Khun Sa's rebels injured in battles with their troops have been given access to medical attention in Thai border hospitals despite Thai military checkpoints.

"In the port of Buchanan, local official Moses Vah told the delegation the towns had been peaceful since the accord was announced last weekend.

"Since last Saturday, there has not been fighting and this Friday night I slept like a log knowing that peace is in sight," he said.

He said that although most of the

World News

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 1995

5



A Polynesian woman carrying a young girl walks past a monument erected by organizers of an anti-nuclear rally in Papeete (AFP photo)

Gunmen kill Pakistani employee of U.S. agency

KARACHI (R) — Gunmen killed a Pakistani employee of the U.S. Drug Enforcement agency (DEA) and wounded his son in Karachi Sunday.

The U.S. embassy said in a statement that Mohammad Shah Nawaz Toor, who worked for the DEA at the U.S. consulate in Karachi, had been shot dead at a bus stop near his home.

His son Muhammad Khurram Toor was wounded in the attack.

"The identity, affiliations and motives of the gunmen are not known at this time," the embassy statement said.

The statement differed

from a police account, which said that Mr. Toor, a 40-year-old retired army major, and his son had been in a car with a driver when a lone gunman on a motorcycle attacked them in the north Nazimabad area of central district.

The gunman stopped near Mr. Toor's Suzuki Alto car at about 7:30 a.m. (0230 GMT) and fired six shots at close range, a police spokesman in Karachi said.

Three bullets hit Mr. Toor, who collapsed and died on the spot. His 16-year-old son was wounded and was taken to the Abbasi State Hospital by the driver, who was unharmed.

Mr. Toor's son was con-

sious when taken to hospital, where he waved photographers away, saying: "I don't want this nonsense." He was placed in an intensive care unit after surgery.

More than 1,300 people have been killed in ethnic, sectarian and factional violence in Karachi this year.

Two U.S. consulate officials were shot dead and a third was wounded by gunmen who ambushed their minibus in the southern port city on March 8. The attackers have not been caught.

After that incident the consulate closed its visa section, cut staff and sent dependents of remaining U.S. diplomats of remaining U.S. diplomats

U.S., China differences remain over Taiwan

BEIJING (R) — China and the United States failed to bridge their differences over Taiwan but agreed to prepare for possible meetings of their presidents, U.S. Under-Secretary of State Peter Tarnoff said Sunday.

Mr. Tarnoff met China's Foreign Minister Qian Qichen after talks with Vice Foreign Minister Li Zehong Saturday in a two-day visit to Beijing aimed at warming chilly Sino-U.S. relations.

China's official Xinhua News Agency has said ties have plunged to their lowest point in 16 years amid Beijing's fury at a Washington decision to allow a landmark private visit by President Lee Teng-Hui of rival Taiwan last June.

"While on the substance the differences (over Taiwan) were not bridged, I think that we did have a full airing of views and there was a commitment on both sides that there are other aspects of the relationship which we are determined to proceed to work on together," Mr. Tarnoff told a news conference.

One aspect was to help prepare for a meeting between Mr. Qian and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in New York in late September at the U.N. General Assembly and a possible meeting of the presidents of the two countries in late October in the United States, Mr. Tarnoff said.

"We agreed both sides would need to prepare thor-

oughly for such a meeting, making every effort to discuss frankly and in a constructive spirit a wide variety of issues and concerns," he said.

For China, the crucial issue of the meetings was Taiwan, as made clear by Xinhua's account of Mr. Tarnoff's meeting with Mr. Qian.

Mr. Qian told Mr. Tarnoff the Leopold had had serious consequences for Sino-U.S. relation, had greatly hurt the feelings of the Chinese people and fuelled tension between Taiwan and China.

"China hopes that such kind of event will never occur," Mr. Qian was quoted as saying.

But the United States has been unwilling to give a formal guarantee that it would not allow any more such visits.

China has viewed Taiwan

Seaplane crashes into U.S. restaurant; 5 killed

NEW SHOREHAM, Rhode Island (AP) — A seaplane crashed into a restaurant and exploded Saturday while trying to land near an island beach, killing five people forcing customers to dive for safety.

The single-engine plane was heading towards the waters off Block Island's Fred Benson State Beach when it crashed into a car in front of G.R. Sharkey's on the island and slammed into the res-

taurant. The plane exploded, causing a fire that destroyed the single-story, wood-frame building, which also housed a gas station. The plane narrowly missed the two gas pumps.

"It was like the whole world exploded," said Corrie Heinz, a bartender at a tavern across the street from Sharkey's.

Christopher McGinniss, a gas station attendant, said he

shouted at people eating on an outside deck at the restaurant to get out of the way. They fled and the plastic chairs and tables on the deck melted, he said.

McGinniss and three other people were in the restaurant at a counter when the plane crashed but it was nuclear how many customers were on the deck.

Four people died immediately at 1:15 p.m. crash, New Shoreham Police Chief William McCombe

Reynolds, Clinton pressure U.K. on N. Ireland

DUBLIN (R) — Former Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds, co-author of an Anglo-Irish peace plan for Northern Ireland, put pressure on Britain Sunday to stop linking peace talks to the surrender of IRA arms.

Reynolds, an influential peace-maker despite his resignation last December, said the London government should convene all-party Northern Ireland peace talks now and discuss the surrender of IRA and other guns as part of a settlement.

"I believe that, instead of making it a precondition for talks, the decommissioning of arms should be made a condition for agreement at the end of the day," he told BMTV television.

British Prime Minister John Major is adamant that the IRA (Irish Republican Army) and its Protestant loyalist rivals must start decommissioning weapons to win an invitation to new talks to build a lasting settlement to the province's 25-year Post.

The issue is crucial as the province counts down to the first anniversary next week of the IRA ceasefire that ushered in an unprecedented period of peace and the start of a peace process which is

currently deadlocked.

Gerry Adams, who heads the IRA's political wing Sinn Fein, has repeatedly warned that the year-long peace could break down unless there are moves towards convening new talks to create a new and peaceful "agreed Ireland."

Mr. Reynolds' view, which is likely to be cold-shouldered by the London government, was echoed in a leaked letter by U.S. President Bill Clinton which underlined differences between Washington and London over the peace process.

Mr. Clinton told Congress man Bruce Morrison, key figure in the U.S. Irish lobby, that the talks should cover key issues of dispute between Britain, Irish nationalists and pro-British Unionists, including arms decommissioning.

"I would expect all-party talks to address policing, prisoner releases, decommissioning of weapons and other issues," said Mr. Clinton, whose letters was leaked to the Dublin Sunday Business Post.

His views are likely to annoy the British government, with which Washington has fallen out before over Mr. Clinton's calls for a rapid move towards all-party talks.

The American president is

due to visit Britain and Ireland in November and Irish republicans, especially Sinn Fein, are hoping he will be able to throw Washington's weight behind moves to steer the peace process out of deadlock.

Mr. Major and Irish Prime Minister John Bruton are due to meet in Dublin soon for a summit to coincide with the first anniversary of the ceasefire but lack of progress on the arms issue is hampering efforts to fix a date, Irish officials said.

British and Irish officials are working on proposals to break the deadlock which could include setting up an international commission to discuss how decommissioning would take place, Irish officials said.

But, they said, Britain wants to see the start of a surrender of weapons used in a war that killed 3,200, especially stocks of Semtex plastic explosives which might be used at any time to bomb London or Belfast if the talks break down.

The Pope spoke in English to pilgrims after his angelus address at his summer residence outside Rome.

Fifteen people, mostly policemen, were hurt in running battles between the authorities and Roman Catholic and Protestant youths in Northern Ireland's western border town of Castlederg, police said Sunday.

Britain has rejected this

France tells peace fleet to stay away from nuclear test zone

PAPEETE (Agencies) — France Saturday stepped up warnings to a protest flotilla to stay away from Mururoa Atoll, as the Greenpeace flagship Rainbow Warrior II came within a day's sailing of a French fleet protecting the nuclear test site.

The warning that France would stringently defend the exclusion zone declared around the atolls also came as 3,000 demonstrators gathered in the French Polynesia capital to protest against the planned resumption of nuclear tests next month.

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tories Jean Jacquies de Peretti arrived in Tahiti Saturday amid tight security as thousands of anti-nuclear protesters staged a rally in Papeete.

Despite Mr. Peretti's arrival at Papeete's airport, up to 140 gendarmes stood guard at the terminal's palm-fringed entrance while the minister gave an impromptu news conference.

"If you contravene this prohibition, you will be liable to prosecution under French law," the admiral says in the letter, which has been printed in English, Spanish and French.

"I assure you that I shall always react as a sailor should you encounter difficulties and that I would not hesitate to lend you assistance if necessary," Adm. Euvete said.

But he adds: "Please also bear in mind that I am quite determined to enforce the law and to carry out the mission I hold to safeguard the security of the testing sites in order to implement the decisions made by the president of the French Republic."

Rainbow Warrior II was rammed by a navy tug and set ablaze by French commandos as it tried to enter Mururoa lagoon in July to protest at President Jacques Chirac's decision to stage more tests.

The Greenpeace ship has since been preparing a new operation for when it arrives with the flotilla in around four days.

The admiral has conceded that Greenpeace's zodiacs rubber dinghies could cause problems.

But since the last clash at Mururoa a cable has been thrown across the entrance and there are two frigates, three patrol boats, and more commandos protecting the lagoon.

Rainbow Warrior II's skipper, Briton John Castle, has ordered extra practice manoeuvres for the high-speed zodiacs as the flagship closes Mururoa.

Meanwhile, France's Minister for Overseas Territories

billion French francs (\$1.4 billion) into Polynesia last year, has pledged the same level of financial support until the year 2003.

"The economic development of Polynesia must continue. I wish to meet everyone who is concerned about the future," Mr. Peretti said at the airport.

"The last part of our nuclear tests will be finished in the very near future and so we must... work to ensure a balanced economic and social development of Polynesia," he said.

Later in the day when Mr. Peretti arrived at Papeete's Paper Stadium to close the South Pacific Games, 300 gendarmes surrounded the sports arena, searching bags belonging to garland-crowned Tahitians as they arrived.



A Polynesian sits in Papeete listening to speeches in front of anti-nuclear posters during a demonstration called by the Evangelical Church of French Polynesia to protest the resumption of French nuclear tests on Marouane Atoll.

Bomb found alongside French high-speed railway

LYON, France (R) — French police Sunday were studying an unexploded bomb found alongside a high-speed rail line in central France, but the government saw no immediate sign of a link to two recent guerrilla attacks in Paris.

A train driver spotted a package by the tracks just north of Lyon as he sped past Saturday morning on the Paris-Lyon line. The area was sealed off and disposal experts defused the 25 kg (55 lb) explosive, in an emptied gas canister.

An explosive device was found Saturday morning, the Interior Ministry said in a statement, confirming media reports earlier Sunday. "The device was transported to the central police laboratory in Paris for analysis."

No one claimed responsibility.

The home-made device, placed by an electric pylon by the track, was apparently meant to go off as a train went by but police said it had a fault in its trigger mechanism.

High speed TGV trains travel on the route at more than 200 kph (125 mph).

Several high-speed trains had passed past the discovery of the device at around 8:30 a.m. (0630 GMT).

The Interior Ministry said it had no immediate evidence of a link to two bombings in Paris that killed seven people and wounded more than 100. Investigators suspect that Algerian extremists were behind those blasts.

"At the present time, no comparison can be made with the devices that exploded in an underground train on July 25 in Paris and at the Avenue de Friedland on Aug. 17," it said.

The July 25 blast in an underground train at Saint-Michel Station near Notre Dame Cathedral killed seven and wounded 86 people. The Aug. 17 bomb by the Arc De Triomphe wounded 17 people. Both were packed in gas canisters.

France has issued an international arrest warrant for an Algerian man, Abdellah Karim Deneche, on suspicion of involvement in the first blast.

Mr. Deneche is being held in a jail in Sweden.

Features

4 Jordanian siblings undergo sex-change surgery in Nablus

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The last of four siblings born with a rare defect that left them appearing female but genetically male underwent surgery Sunday to become a boy.

"I had six granddaughters and two grandsons, and now I have six grandsons and two granddaughters," I thank God and the doctor," their grandmother, Fatima Netasha, told the Israeli newspaper Yediot Achronot.

The youths, ages 10, 11, 12, and 17, live in Amman. Their family brought them to the West Bank town of Nablus for the operation because it was cheaper.

The four were raised as girls. The family first discovered the disorder when the oldest, 17-year-old Mohammad, went through puberty. Mohammad's voice broke, and he began to develop facial hair and a male physique.

Mohammad was diagnosed as a genetic male, but with male genitals that had never descended from the pubic cavity.

His three younger siblings were recently diagnosed with the same genetic defect, which was caused by low testosterone levels and resulted in a female appearance throughout childhood.

Dr. Yousef Al Masri of the Al Ittihad hospital in Nablus

operated on Mohammad in 1992, allowing the genitals to descend. Another operation rearranged his urinary tract, and hormone treatment completed the process.

Dr. Masri operated Sunday on the youngest child, 10-year-old Ayar — now called Muhammad. The other two siblings, 11-year-old Dana — now Madi — and 12-year-old Hiba — now Madi — underwent surgery last week.

Afterwards, the youngsters celebrated by cutting their long hair short, removing their jewellery and donning boys' pyjamas.

Ariel Ressler, an endocrinologist at Jerusalem's Hadassah hospital who has studied the phenomenon in Gaza's Jahaliya refugee camp where it is widespread, said the value placed by Arab society on having boys is an incentive for the families to undertake the operation.

Mr. Ressler said the condition is common among Palestinians in Jahaliya as a result of intermarriage. One in 150 males in the camp are born with the defect, he said.

"My patients are happy because they enjoyed being transformed into males," Dr. Masri, who has performed the operation on seven other patients as well, told Associated Press Television Sunday.

PLO, Israel sign accord

(Continued from page 1)

over to Palestinian control until the interim agreement is reached.

Much of the accord concerns the minutiae of government. For example, it specifies that Palestinian butane gas cylinders must be a different colour than Israeli ones.

A relatively small audience, including the ambassadors of Russia, the United States, Norway, Israel, as well as a Palestinian representative, attended the ceremony.

"Intensive negotiations are going on in Eilat to finish a full second-stage agreement which we hope will sign soon to put an end to the tragedies and bloodshed this region has seen," Mr. Tarifi said.

Talks resumed in Eilat on Sunday as the two sides tried to eliminate the remaining barriers to a full accord on extending self-rule.

On Thursday Israel recognized Palestinian rights to water sources in the West Bank, while the PLO agreed to let discussion of the issue be postponed until talks on the final status of the territories, to begin next May.

Wednesday's agreement was the second one turning

over day-to-day duties in the West Bank to Palestinians. Almost a year ago an agreement gave them control over education, health, welfare, tourism and taxation.

The original Washington accord envisioned the elections taking place in July 1994, but the talks have been delayed by violence — particularly attacks on Israelis by Palestinians opposed to the peace pact — and by laborious details of negotiation.

Also, the negotiators have repeatedly skirted contentious issues like water sharing and the withdrawal of troops from Hebron, a West Bank town where about 400 Israeli settlers live among the 110,000 Palestinian population.

The interim pact settling these issues was expected to be signed early next month in Washington. But an Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said negotiators were now aiming for finishing in late September and added he was uncertain the signing would be in Washington.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres voiced hopes that a full agreement could be signed in mid-September in Washington. "It will not be Sept. 7 but a few days after," he said in Tel Aviv.

Jericho remains under siege

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinian autonomy is implemented, more West Bank towns could become "places of refuge and serve as bases of terror."

"This is what we see as the challenge of the Palestinian authority: to prove it is cooperating with us and not evading its duty according to the (autonomy) agreement," he said.

In a radio interview late Sunday, Israeli Justice Minister David Libai opened the way for a lifting of roadblocks that have prevented drivers from entering or leaving Jericho town for the past five days.

"By virtue of the accords signed between us, the Palestinian Authority is not obliged to transfer criminals to us from the moment they are judged and sentenced," he said. "That's why we have not presented any formal extradition request."

Mr. Libai, however, insisted that Israel was right to seek all available information on the "terrorist activities" of the two men.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said: "We have examined the legal aspects of this question in cabinet and we have concluded that extradition cannot be requested."

Palestinian Prosecutor General Abu Ziad Al Bishawi said the two militants were found guilty mainly of "harming the security" of the self-rule authority, the Palestinian population and the peace process.

According to the radio, the Israeli authorities suspect the Palestinians of jailing the militiamen to justify their refusal to hand them over.

Yoel Zinger, legal advisor to the Israeli foreign ministry, said: "This sudden trial was strange to say the least. I hope it is not a manoeuvre."

U.N. ponders nightmare scenario in Sarajevo

By Kurt Schork

Reuter

SARAJEVO — Even as efforts to broker a Bosnian peace deal quicken, U.N. officials are pondering the nightmare scenario of a last-ditch bid by separatist Serbs to end the war with a U.N.-NATO force arrayed to deter attacks on the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo.

U.N. planners say separatist Serbs besieging the city could try to cut the sole government supply route over Mount Igman or assault and occupy the U.N.-held airport, under which Bosnian supply tunnels run.

Were they to succeed, the Serbs would isolate the capital, bottling up government leaders, 300,000 civilians and thousands of U.N. peacekeepers. Bosnian officials would have no option but to sue for peace.

"It's the only way the Serbs could end the war decisively on their terms," said a U.N. officer who asked not to be named.

"Any attack on Igman or the airport would be high-risk, but the potential reward is there. It's difficult to imagine the Serbs changing a serious confrontation with NATO over anything other than a final victory. That means Sarajevo."

U.N. officials believe that recent defeats suffered by Serb forces in Croatia and Bosnia have emboldened the proud and prickly

Bosnian Serb army commander general Ratko Mladić, past master of the bold counter-stroke.

Mr. Mladić has shown his army to be more than a match for government troops and the combined U.N.-NATO forces arrayed to deter attacks on "safe areas" like Sarajevo.

When the Bosnian Serbs seized hundreds of heavy weapons from U.N. depots around Sarajevo in May, they also took 400 U.N. peacekeepers hostage, using some as human shields to prevent retaliatory NATO air strikes.

U.N. forces are not toothless around Igman or Sarajevo. About 500 British and French members of the U.N. Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) are camped in Mount Igman, west of Sarajevo, backed by artillery, heavy mortars and tanks.

Also on Igman are thousands of Bosnian army troops who could be expected to fiercely oppose any Serb advance on the government's key supply route.

Several hundred French foreign legionnaires hold the airport, separated from Bosnian army and Serb

troops by huge earthen berms but only a few hundred metres of ground.

RRF artillery is within easy range of the airport and NATO fighters on aircraft carriers in the Adriatic are just 30 minutes away.

U.N. officials say both the Igman supply route and the airport are "vital ground" because they represent the only non-Serb controlled necessities in and out of Sarajevo — essential for both relief supplies and peacekeepers.

The muscle and the mandate are there to oppose any Serb advance but, as always, the question is whether the U.N.-NATO combine has the necessary political will.

The nightmare scenario is a determined Serb attack to seize Sarajevo's airport, with Serb soldiers popping up inside the perimeter from tunnels which U.N. officials suspect are already in place.

Backed by Serb tanks and artillery, these troops might surprise the United Nations and seize substantial numbers of hostages, daring NATO and the RRF to attack — the exact point at which Western resolve has cracked in the past.

Having blown up the government supply tunnel under the airport and blocked the last route in and out of Sarajevo, Mr. Mladić might then feel comfortable talking peace.



The stream of refugees continue (AFP file photo)

Revegetating degraded land

By John Madeley

"JUST LOOK at this! Scott Christiansen is standing on a rocky hillside in northern Syria which only two years ago was almost totally degraded.

But now, Drs. Christiansen and Ahmed Osman, pasture specialists with the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), are excited by what they are seeing.

Overgrazing, poor management by farmers and land tenure systems that give them little encouragement to improve their land, have caused the degradation of between 30 and 15 million hectares of hillsides in West Asia (the Middle East) and North Africa. Pasture land for the sheep has been lost, and milk and meat production have suffered, with fewer lambs being weaned.

As the hillside was suffering from a phosphorous deficiency, part of it was also fertilised with small amounts of phosphate fertiliser.

Today the result are clear. The hillside has sprung back into life. Land that was almost useless for grazing has been brought back into production.

"I've never seen the hill looking so good," says Abderrahman, Abu Ziad's

older brother, aged 60, pointing to the seeded part. Medics and clovers are growing in abundance — everywhere there are plants, which means that the land is more suitable for grazing sheep.

"We worked with them to revegetate this section of their hill with pasture plants that are found in the area, chiefly medics, annual plants from the same family as alfalfa, and clovers," says Drs. Christiansen. "We provided them with the seed and pods of these plants to scatter on the hillside. And we asked them not to graze their sheep here until the seed had germinated, matured and set more seed," adds Drs. Osman.

Other farmers in the neighbourhood are seeing for themselves the success that Abu Ziad and his brothers are having, and are becoming interested in doing the same. One farmer, Abu Hassan, is so convinced about the value of medics he is planning to start a small nursery to grow the seeds for oversowing on his own land. ICARDA wants him to grow more than he needs himself, so that extra seed will be available for sale to, or barter with, other interested farmers. Up until now ICARDA has provided the seeds.

"All the farmers in the area know what these

medics and clover plants are," say the ICARDA scientists. "They recognise and value them for their qualities, and the contribution they can make to milk production and lamb growth rates. What we need now are mechanisms to increase the supply of seeds, and spread them to their areas with the participation of the farmers."

Drs. Christiansen and Drs. Osman believe that this seeding of degraded areas has an important part to play in stopping the process of land degradation in the West Asia and North Africa region. And it can be done, they emphasise, by using local seeds.

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"All the technology we are using is right here — it is locally available, plant genetic resources," says Drs. Osman. "The farmers have to do is not to graze their sheep on the plants during the months of April and May when the flowering occurs, and when the plants are setting new seed. After that, the sheep can graze the plants. This management allows a stock of seeds to build up in the soil

seeds. Drs. Osman and Christiansen, with colleagues in the Pasture, Forage and Livestock Programme, and Programme Leader Gus Gintzburger, are hoping that many countries will adopt the system. But they stress this will take time. "Tradition is strong," says Drs. Christiansen. "Things will not change immediately, but they can start to improve."

ICARDA conducts research in 24 countries in West Asia and North Africa and is part of the worldwide network of research centres that belong to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.

An exciting fruit of ICARDA's research is that as much as 15 million hectares of degraded hillsides in its 24-country region could be rehabilitated. And that means more than just the revegetation of degraded land. It means more income for farmers and more milk and meat for local people. In today's hungry world, it means more food.

In Jordan and Lebanon, hillsides are also being sown with clover and medie

Crown Prince, Peres meet today

(Continued from page 1)

Jordan and Israel are also seeking to coordinate their presentations at the MENA summit to be held in October and this is also an issue expected to be tackled at today's meeting.

Officials said they expected the Crown Prince and Gen. Hassan to review the progress reached so far in coordination of presentations as well as a joint strategy at the summit aimed at attracting investments and foreign companies to the region in

the newfound state of peace and stability.

Also expected to be tackled during today's meetings is the implementation of projects stipulated in the Oct. 26 peace treaty. These include dams in the north and a water desalination plant that aim at ensuring that Jordan will get its share of water as agreed upon in the peace treaty. Feasibility studies financed by the European Union are under way on the projects.

The House is expected to continue discussions of the income tax draft law on Wednesday. The proposed legislation will introduce sweeping reductions in income tax levied on individuals, banks and companies. It is part of a trade package which includes an amendment to the Sales Tax Law as well as the Encouragement of Investment Law. All draft laws are expected to be finalised during this extraordinary session ahead of the Middle East and North Africa economic summit that will be held in Amman at the end of October.

House refuses to favour polygamists

(Continued from page 1)

Islamic Sharia says all wives should share the same percentage of the inheritance to which the first wife is entitled.

"Why should the husband be entitled to tax exemption for all wives while these wives' rights are defined in the inheritance law and have to share the same percentage of the one eighth that is allotted to one wife?" asked Ms. Faisal.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Abdul Ra'ouf Rawahdeh, who is also a deputy, supported Ms. Faisal's arguments.

"As far as I know, all wives share the same inheritance of the one eighth (percentage)."

The House is expected to

movement of forces toward Kuwait," Adm. Redd told reporters.

The Iraqi daily Babel, which is run by President Saddam's eldest son Uday, on Sunday mocked an offer of asylum by Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak and said President Saddam would never leave Iraq.

The 1,400 troops have been resting their weapons and checking tanks as well as other equipment since they arrived last week and are expected to begin manoeuvres on Monday or Tuesday, Captain Austin Johnson said.

Kuwaiti forces will join the U.S. troops at some point during the 45-day war games in the desert south of the Iraqi border.

Capt. Johnson said earlier that he expected the manoeuvres to begin Saturday or Sunday, but he denied there was any delay.

The exercises were brought forward from October after Washington detected "unusual" Iraqi military activity which coincided with the defection of Lieutenant-General Hassan.

The troops will use M1-A1 tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles and other materiel stored at Camp Doha, north of Kuwait City, under a defence agreement signed in the wake of the 1991 Gulf war.

Vice Admiral Scott Redd, the commander of the U.S. Fifth Fleet, said aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier on Saturday that the 28,000 U.S. military personnel in the region were in a "very high state of readiness."

"It is getting a failing mark," said Shimon Shetreet, the Israeli minister of justice, referring to the trial of the two Hamas activists.

According to the radio, the Israeli authorities suspect the Palestinians of jailing the militiamen to justify their refusal to hand them over.

Yoel Zinger, legal advisor to the Israeli foreign ministry, said: "This sudden trial was strange to say the least. I hope it is not a manoeuvre."

Although Iraq appears to have increased its own troop readiness since July, "at this point in time there are no

wives should share the same percentage of the inheritance to which the first wife is entitled.

"The House is expected to

continue discussions of the income tax draft law on Wednesday. The proposed legislation will introduce sweeping reductions in income tax levied on individuals, banks and companies. It is part of a trade package which includes an amendment to the Sales Tax Law as well as the Encouragement of Investment Law. All draft laws are expected to be finalised during this extraordinary session ahead of the Middle East and North Africa economic summit that will be held in

Arab Gulf states urged to forge export strategy

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states should map out a joint strategy to increase their non-oil exports as part of their attempts to reduce dependence on volatile crude earnings, according to a regional study.

The strategy should include setting up export information centres in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), staging joint exhibitions abroad, and creating an export promotion council grouping the six members, said a GCC study.

"The information centres will provide statistics and other data on foreign markets, demand and supply, and marketing opportunities," said the study, published in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) daily Al Bayan Sunday.

"Such centres should be linked to the World Trade Organisation and international export information centres in Singapore, Taiwan

and Hong Kong," added the study, issued by the federation of GCC chambers of commerce and industry.

The GCC's non-oil exports stood at around \$13 billion in 1994, including nearly \$5.7 billion worth of exports among the six members.

The figure is nearly double that in 1985 as GCC states pressed ahead with industrialisation campaigns to diversify their oil-reliant economies.

The six members — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE — have pumped more than \$40 billion into nearly 5,000 industrial projects but most of their products have remained confined to light industries as they lack technology for heavy industry.

Gulf states should set up a higher council to coordinate their industries and develop exports," the study said. "They should also step up exhibitions abroad and upgrade their products to boost their competitiveness."

Despite progress, non-oil exports, including petrochemicals, are still a fraction of their crude and gas sales of more than \$70 billion a year. The industrial sector also does not exceed seven per

cent of the gross domestic product compared with over 35 per cent of the oil sector.

Apart from chemicals, GCC industries include cement and other building materials, paper, home appliances, farm products, clothes and textiles.

The six members, which control around 45 per cent of the world's oil reserves, have been locked in negotiations with Japan, the European Union and the United States to acquire industrial technology in return for long-term crude supplies. But industrial powers are reluctant to set up major projects on the grounds the region is relatively small and investment laws are restrictive.

Gulf states should set up a higher council to coordinate their industries and develop exports," the study said. "They should also step up exhibitions abroad and upgrade their products to boost their competitiveness."

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The proposal, approved by a 16-1 cabinet vote, must now pass parliament.

It includes across-the-board cuts of 1.7 billion shekels (\$57 million) but leaves the military budget about the same in real terms at 25.2 billion shekels (\$8.3 billion), said finance ministry spokesman Eli Yosef.

The army, however, has complained that since a planned troop withdrawal from parts of the West Bank slated to become autonomous will likely cost hundreds of millions of dollars, the current funding level was insufficient. "I am totally unsatisfied with the proposed military budget," said Health Minister Ephraim Sneh, a former West Bank military governor who cast the only opposing vote. "In such a year... we can increase the deficit and raise taxes a little."

The budget proposal foresees minor tax cuts and reduces the deficit from three per cent to 2.5 per cent of national product.

About 35 per cent of the budget goes to loan repayment — much of that to the United States, which provides Israel with \$3 billion in loans and grants annually.

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Business & Finance



Ministry flushes out highly-paid employees

★ IN ORDER to flush out the employees who earn more than JD6,000 a year, the Ministry of Supply has officially written to all the ministries and departments and obtained lists of names of all industrialists and owners of commercial entities from the chambers of industry and commerce. The ministry also went after the names of real estate owners and wrote to universities and colleges to obtain names of staff who do not qualify to receive food subsidies. Even banks were asked to provide information in addition to a general survey by the ministry to identify people who should be excluded from subsidy lists. Supply Minister Adel Qudah said at a press conference that the ministry has obtained the national identification number for the citizens and work is progressing at an intensive pace. He expected the work to be completed in two months and noted that the number of beneficiaries from food subsidies could be cut by 150,000 families leaving only 500,000 families to benefit from food coupons.

Mr. Qudah said the ministry was intensifying its inspections in the market to ensure merchants are abiding by the fixed prices. He revealed that during the first seven months of this year, the ministry issued 16,115 violation tickets compared to 14,146 violation tickets issued during the whole of last year.

The minister pointed out that the bread subsidy costs the treasury more than JD 75 million as the Kingdom consumes about 650,000 tonnes of wheat now costing \$230 (JD 161) per tonne including transportation and storage as well as other handling expenses. The ministry's subsidy for sugar amounts to JD 200 per tonne, the minister said, noting that the price per tonne including transportation, storage and other expenses has reached \$500 (JD 350). As such, the kilogramme of sugar selling at JD 0.250 at the subsidised price has an actual cost of JD 0.350. During the past seven months, the ministry sold 72,000 tonnes of the subsidised price and 97,000 tonnes at the free price. As for rice, the cost per tonne including all charges reaches JD 340. The ministry sells the tonne for JD 130 at the subsidised price, taking into consideration that the volume sold between January and July of this year amounted to 70,000 tonnes with only 18,000 tonnes selling at the free price. Milk costing \$38 per carton sells at \$35 at the subsidised price under which 71,000 cartons were sold while 14,000 cartons were sold at the free price.

Mr. Qudah said the Kingdom's annual consumption of barley amounts to 600,000 tonnes of which 200,000 tonnes is secured from Syria and the rest is purchased from international markets. He pointed out that locally-produced barley is subsidised at JD 40 per tonne. Yellow corn costs the ministry JD 120 per tonne but 310,000 tonnes are at JD 116 per tonne every year.

With such subsidies, the minister expects a total figure of JD 96 million, more than triple the amount allocated for in the 1995 budget. However, he added the difference will be covered by the treasury.

Mr. Qudah outlined to the journalists the projects that his ministry was undertaking. He mentioned expanding the silos in Irbid and mechanising the silos in Russeifa. Tenders were also floated to build supply complexes, with a capacity of 8,000 tonnes each, at Jerash, Ghor Al Safi, Al Kafreia, Madaba, Ruweisheh, Ajloun, northern Ghor, Deir Alla, Mafrak and Maan. Expansion of refrigerators at Balq, Jerash and Mafrak was also being processed.

(Al Ra'i, Al Aswag)

Oman to launch petrochemical project in two months

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Gulf state of Oman will begin measures to build a major petrochemical complex in the next two months followed by a multi-billion-dollar gas liquefaction project, an Omani minister was quoted as saying.

Mohammed Ibn Musa Al Yusuf, minister of state for development affairs, said the petrochemical project would cost around \$700 million and would be run by the private sector as part of economic reforms.

"The project will be managed by the private sector while the government will benefit from selling gas to it. Executive measures for the project will start within two months," he told the United Arab Emirates daily Al Ittihad.

Mr. Yusuf did not provide details of the project, which would be Oman's first petrochemical plant. He also did not make clear if foreign investors would be allowed to contribute to the project.

Another key venture involves an LNG plant with a production capacity of six million tonnes per year. Its costs are estimated at \$9 billion, to be borrowed from local and international banks, Mr. Yusuf said.

"Financing for the LNG project is available as banks are ready to extend loans. Such loans would be pro-

vided over a period of four years and repayment would come from the project's revenues between 1999 and 2004," he said.

He said the LNG venture had a priority over a project to supply India with natural gas through an underwater pipeline that could cost around \$5 billion. But he added "this project will see light as well."

Oman, a non-OPEC oil producer with an output of around 840,000 barrels per day, has launched reforms to cushion the impact of weak crude prices and give its private sector a greater role in domestic development.

Several other projects involving electricity, sewage, industry and farming would be carried out in participation with the private sector, which now accounts for nearly 40 per cent of the gross domestic product.

Mr. Yusuf said such enterprises, coupled with ongoing reforms and cuts in state expenditure, would help the government in wiping out its budget deficit. But he ruled out the imposition of fresh income taxes in the near future.

"There are no plans to increase taxes on profits within the next five years. Instead, the government will work to encourage the private sector to upgrade productivity and boost exports."

Financial Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (August 21-August 25, 1995)

AMMAN — The U.S. unit witnessed modest losses against other major currencies last week. It ended the week 0.81 per cent lower against the yen, 0.30 per cent lower against the mark, and 0.62 per cent lower against sterling.

The dollar rose marginally against sterling and the mark Monday, while depreciating modestly against the yen. Reports indicated that the dollar traded in narrow ranges as traders awaited the meetings of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) the next day and the Bundesbank Council on Thursday.

The U.S. unit continued its appreciation against sterling and the mark Tuesday, while stabilising against the yen. The dollar's rise came after the FOMC decision to leave its monetary policy unchanged. Analysts indicated the move came as a result of the Fed's satisfaction with the performance of the U.S. economy, which seems to be rebounding following its sluggishness during the first half of the year.

In the meantime, reports indicated that traders were waiting for Bundesbank meeting results on Thursday. Reports also indicated that there were increased expectations that the Bundesbank might lower German interest rates during that meeting. Comments from Bundesbank officials and German economic data released recently supported these expectations.

The dollar depreciated against other major currencies Wednesday, however. Meanwhile, the Bundesbank trimmed its repurchase rate by six basis points to 4.39 per cent.

The dollar continued its depreciation against other major currencies Thursday, despite a Bundesbank monetary easing. The Bundesbank lowered its discount and Lombard rates by 0.5 per cent to 3.5 per cent and 3.5 per cent respectively. The dollar was reported to have appreciated against other major currencies in response to the Bundesbank move, but the release of the U.S. durable goods report, showing a decline of 1.7 per cent in July, compared to a decline of 0.3 per cent during the previous month, triggered a dollar sell-off, and limited its rise.

The dollar rose marginally against the yen, while retreating against the mark and sterling at the end of the week. Reports indicated that the dollar's decline against the mark came in view of traders' reaction to the resignation of France's finance minister, which triggered increased demand for the mark as a safe-haven currency.

The U.S. unit, thus ended the week at 1.4708 marks, 96.65 yen and at \$1.5505 to sterling.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

| Currency | Friday August 18 - 1995 | Punday August 25 - 1995 | Percent Change |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Sterling Pound* | 1.5410 | 1.5505 | 0.62% |
| Deutsche Mark | 1.4752 | 1.4708 | 0.30% |
| Swiss Franc | 1.2233 | 1.2090 | -1.18% |
| French Franc | 5.0555 | 5.0740 | (0.36)% |
| Japanese Yen | 97.43 | 96.65 | -0.81% |

* USD Per STG

Euro-Currency Interest Rates*

| Currency | August 18 - 1995 | August 23 - 1995 |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| | 1-Month (%) | 1-Year (%) |
| U.S. Dollar | 5.81 | 5.87 |
| Sterling Pound | 6.56 | 6.94 |
| Deutsche Mark | 4.31 | 4.37 |
| Swiss Franc | 2.87 | 2.93 |
| French Franc | 5.87 | 5.81 |
| Japanese Yen | 0.87 | 1.00 |

*Interest bid rates for amounts exceeding US Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: August 27 - 1995

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| U.S. Dollar | 0.7120 | 0.7140 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.025 | 1.030 |
| Deutsche Mark | 0.4836 | 0.4860 |
| Swiss Franc | 0.5877 | 0.5906 |
| French Franc | 0.1402 | 0.1409 |
| Japanese Yen | 0.7355 | 0.7392 |
| Dutch Guilder | 0.4316 | 0.4338 |
| Swedish Krona | | |
| Dalma Lira* | 0.0439 | 0.0441 |
| Belgian Franc | | |

* Per 100

Iraq, debt concerns take shine off Kuwait stocks

KUWAIT (R) — Fresh tension over Iraq and looming repayments on bad debt have slowed activity on Kuwait's stock exchange following a 26 per cent rise in share values since January that made it the Gulf's most buoyant exchange.

Economists say security jitters over Iraq and the prospect of a gradual sell-off by investors repaying debt has depressed Kuwaiti stock exchange volume and could keep a lid on prices.

The level of turbulence in the region makes many wonder what will come next. Even if (Iraq President) Saddam Hussein goes, can you

predict who his successor will be or say whether he will take power peacefully?" a commercial banker said.

He was referring to heightened tension between the United States and Iraq after President Saddam's two sons-in-law, including the mastermind of Iraq's military industries, defected to Jordan with their families on Aug. 8.

The men have called for President Saddam's overthrow and the United States has moved more forces into the region as a precaution.

"The market might be steady for now but you will probably see a decline [in values]," said economist

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 1995 9

Aug. 16 approved a bill granting easier terms for the bad debt. Many investors sat back to study the implications of the law's complex terms for each stock.

The week after the parliament voted, daily average volume dropped 37 per cent to 39 million and daily average value traded slumped 33 per cent to 7.2 million dinars (\$24 million).

Share prices have held up, however, bearing out predictions that the new easier terms will not require a fire-sale of assets by debtors. The price index finished on Saturday at 1,252, a record high

and up 1.5 per cent from Aug. 16.

Volume had soared between January and August, with demand fuelled by a spate of privatisations and hopes for a solution to the 13-year-old wrangle over how to settle the bad loans owed by 10,000 individual and corporate borrowers.

The original settlement terms would have required some debtors to settle 2.3 million dinars (\$7.6 billion) by Sept. 6. Now they have five years to repay, with a first tranche of 400 million dinars (\$1.3 billion) payable by Dec. 6.

Moroccan elected to head African Development Bank

ABIDJAN (R) — The African Development Bank has finally elected a new president, raising hopes that its AAA credit rating is safe and long-delayed reforms of its management and loans portfolio can get under way.

Omar Kabbaj, a former adviser in the Moroccan prime minister's office, eventually won after nine rounds of voting and negotiations in Ivory Coast on Friday and Saturday, and five rounds of voting in Nigeria on May.

But though financially sound, the bank is riven by political infighting and accusations of bad management and corruption.

Credit rating agency Standard and Poor's put the bank on credit watch in June, citing the failure to elect a president and concern about relations between regional and non-regional shareholders.

"The bank has some problems, I recognise that, I'm not maybe aware of the extent, I'll do that when I take up my duties," Mr. Kabbaj told reporters after his election.

He said he planned to get an independent consultant to audit the various recent studies of the bank's management and loans policy and draw up a reform programme, which would be submitted to members for consultation then approved by the governors.

"I think this step is needed if we want to give the necessary signal to our members and to the markets," he said.

The impasse was finally resolved in round eight when Nigeria, the bank's biggest shareholder with 10.28 per cent, withdrew its candidate.

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Reports also indicated that there were increased expectations that the Bundesbank might lower German interest rates during that meeting. Comments from Bundesbank officials and German economic data released recently supported these expectations.

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The dollar continued its depreciation against other major currencies Thursday, despite a Bundesbank monetary easing. The Bundesbank lowered its discount and Lombard rates by 0.5 per cent to 3.5 per cent and 3.5 per cent respectively. The dollar was reported to have appreciated against other major currencies in response to the Bundesbank move, but the release of the U.S. durable goods report, showing a decline of 1.7 per cent in July, compared to a decline of 0.3 per cent during the previous month, triggered a dollar sell-off, and limited its rise.

The dollar rose marginally against the yen, while retreating against the mark and sterling at the end of the week. Reports indicated that the dollar's decline against the mark came in view of traders' reaction to the resignation of France's finance minister, which triggered increased demand for the mark as a safe-haven currency.

U.S. OPEN PREVIEW

Seles seeks 3rd U.S. Open in comeback; Agassi favourite

NEW YORK (AP) — Monica Seles won the last two U.S. Opens she played before she was stabbed in 1993, and the way she looks now she's the favourite to win it a third time when play begins on Monday.

Rarer is the athlete who returns from a long layoff as good as ever straight from the start. Rarer still is one who comes back better, the way the two-inch (5.1 cms) taller Seles appears to be with a bigger serve and more confident volleys.

Seles began her comeback by winning the Canadian Open last week as easily as she ever won any tournament. The U.S. Open, a two-week grind, will be tougher. But barring a flareup of the tendinitis in her left knee, or any new injury, she has the talent and the draw to win her ninth Grand Slam title.

"The first time back, it's unrealistic," Seles said as she sought to take the pressure off herself. "It doesn't matter. If I play well, that's great."

It'll be a boon for tennis just to have her back in the Open, playing it for the first time as an American citizen.

Two-time men's champion Pete Sampras, seeded second behind defending champion Andre Agassi, was impressed by Seles' cruise in the Canadian.

"It certainly wouldn't happen in the men's game, that's for sure," Sampras said. "But to come back after 2½ years and really dominate... I saw some of the scores up there and she seemed like she never really left the tour. That is pretty unbelievable, to be that match-tough so quickly, first tournament back. I mean, she is killing everyone. That is an indication of how much better she is than the rest of the girls."

A year ago, Sampras got knocked out of the open in the fourth round by Jaime Yzaga after a one-month layoff due to injury. Sampras worked out hard on a bike during his absence, practised as much as he could, but still wasn't "match-tough." None of the men, Sampras said,



Monica Seles

could come back from a much longer layoff and win right away as Seles did.

"I mean, you are out for two years, you come back, and to win a final one and love, that is pretty much impossible," Sampras said. "If I was out for two years and came back, who is to say if I could get through the qualifiers? It is a whole different game."

Sampras cited the comeback of Mats Wilander, winner of three Grand Slam titles

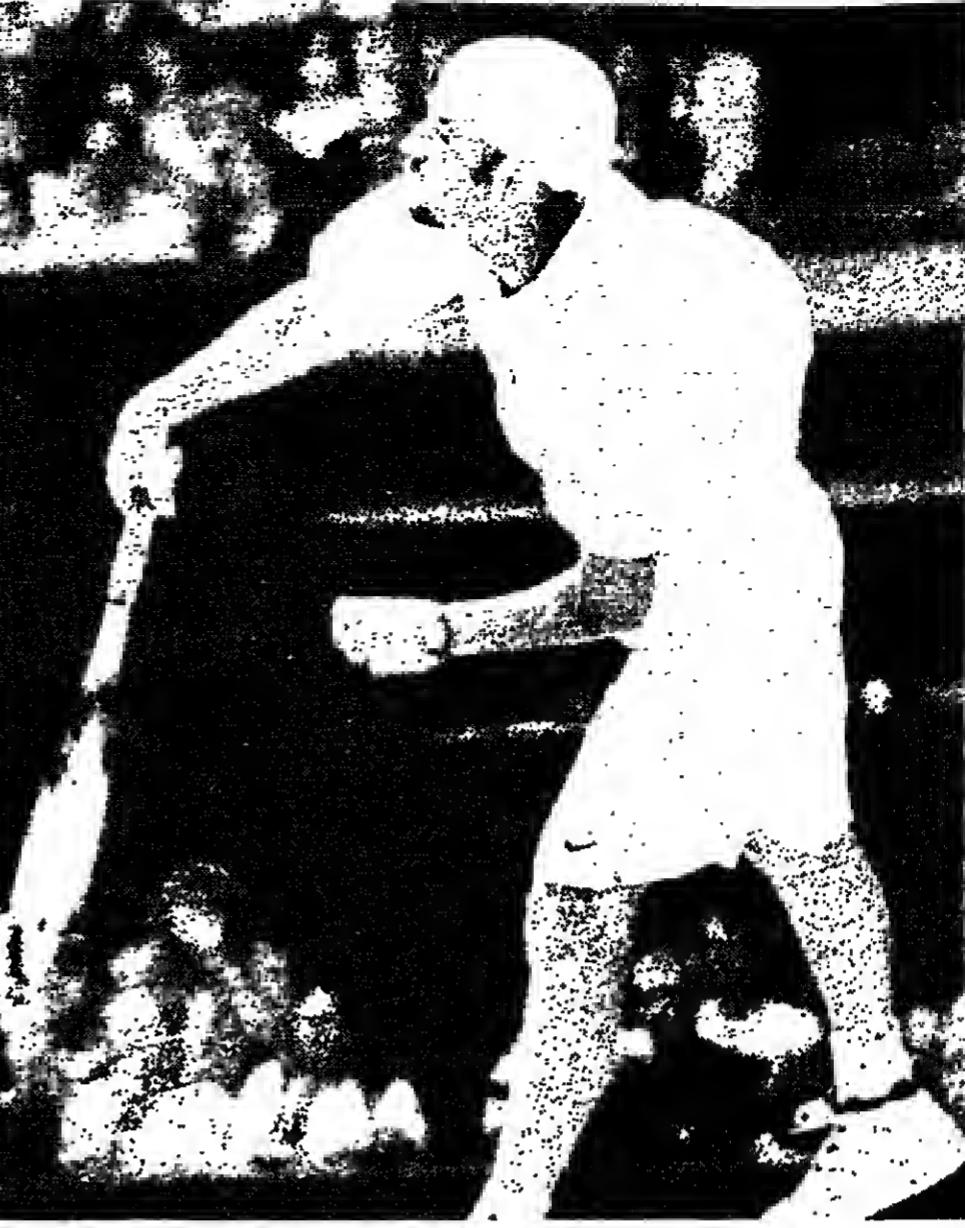
in 1988, who took off most of three years before playing his first full season again last year.

"It wasn't like he was continuing for major titles," Sampras said. "The top four, five girls are so much better than the rest, it's a joke. I mean, really, those girls are winning their matches two and love, one and one. That is unheard of in the men's game. She and Graf and the rest of the top five or 10 are so much better than someone

ranked 20. It seems like those girls really don't start playing their best tennis until the quarterfinals or semifinals, because the first four matches are kind of like a consolation kind of like a qualifying for them. That is the way it is in the ladies' game."

The difference in ability between the top five players

Graf, Seles, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, Conchita Martinez, Jana Novotna and Mary Pierce — and the rest of the field is wide.



World No. 1 Andre Agassi

and for this tournament, Graf is a questionable con-

tender with her mind on the tax charges against her father in Germany, her back suspect and her confidence perhaps down. Graf also has a very tough draw, starting with Amanda Coetzer, who beat her in the first round in Canada. If Graf gets to the quarters, she could face

Pierce, the Australian Open champion, with the winner likely to play Sanchez Vicario in the semis. Seles, seeded

second, has a much easier draw to the final.

But for all the depth of the men's draw — any of the top 100 players could beat the highest-ranked men on a given day — even Sampras acknowledges that, just like the women, there are only five or six who truly would be considered contenders. And that's being generous.

Agassi and Sampras have so thoroughly dominated the men's game that it would be a surprise if they didn't meet in

the final. The third-seeded player, French Open champion Thomas Muster, prepared for this hardcourt event by playing on clay in Croatia and would be lucky to get past the quarters.

Boris Becker, the No. 4 seed and 1989 champion, reached the Wimbledon final but hasn't gone beyond the fourth round at the U.S. Open since 1990. This surface doesn't suit him nearly as well as grass.

Kafelnikov, Siemerink advance to Hamlet Cup final

COMMACK, New York (R) — Top-seed Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia beat Switzerland's Mark Rosset for the first time in six meetings on Saturday to reach the final of the Hamlet Cup.

Kafelnikov will meet unseeded Jan Siemerink of the Netherlands who beat Renzo Furlan of Italy 6-4, 6-3.

Rosset came back from a 2-5 deficit to force a tie-break. Rosset held his first set point at 6-5 in the tie-break, but Kafelnikov recovered to win the final three points and then opened the second set by breaking Rosset's serve.

"I don't think I would have won the match if I'd lost the first set," Kafelnikov said. "I would've been too worn out physically and mentally. Once I won that set, I was very confident and thought that I'd win the second set. This gives me confidence going into the U.S. Open."

Kafelnikov raised his record for the year to 58-20 and will be the seventh seed at the U.S. Open.

Siemerink, who beat Boris Becker three weeks ago in Cincinnati, won his lone career singles title in Singapore in 1991, but is in his second final. In four weeks, last month he reached the final on clay at Amsterdam.

Siemerink's serve-and-volley attack was too much for Furlan, taking just 70 minutes to pick up his third consecutive straight-set victory.

Siemerink also upset second-seeded Wayne Ferreira in the first round in three sets.

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Champions shrouded in early-season doubt

to the last five matches of last term when they crawled over the championship finish line ahead of United by a short head.

Harford maintained: "We doo' bave to wind up our players at all for any game. They're all professionals."

"Perhaps it's better for the defenders when they have to work hard. When they have to defend for long spells they get better."

"In a lot of games last year we were defending a lot and they got better because they had a lot of work. In the games we've lost they haven't had much to do."

Platt needs time to ease back into British ways

stick with the side which disappointed at Burnley Park. "We didn't break them down enough and then gave away a goal at the end again, just like we did at Hillsborough," said the manager.

"Perhaps it's better for the defenders when they have to work hard. When they have to defend for long spells they get better."

"When I've had more time on the training ground with the lads, I'll be better. We are all getting better as we go along and the important thing is that we are still unbeaten."

"When the players have got more used to the touches of Dennis Bergkamp and learn more about the way Bruce Rioch wants us to play you will see things happen."

"I spoke to Gary Lineker and he warned me, from his experience when he came back from Spain, that it probably takes six or seven games before your reactions become attuned again to the pace here. And now it is even faster."

The England captain has been beset by injuries in the pre-season build-up and is struggling to come to terms again with the fierce pace of the English game.

His goal at Everton last Wednesday was a reminder of what he can do, but he followed a poor opening-day performance against Middlesbrough with another of the goalsless draw at Coventry on Saturday.

And he admitted: "I know I've got more work to do yet before I'm at full steam."

"The game is very fast here, much different to the pace in Italy and that is not a surprise to me, but the expectation is so high, probably because of all the foreign stars coming here, the big money in the transfer market and the prospect of the European Championship finals here at the end of the season."

"Everybody is flying and my preparation has been a bit

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

PAINTING A FALSE PICTURE

West led the fourth-best spade.

The art of deception at the bridge table is difficult to practice, especially for the defenders—they run the risk of fooling partner rather than declarer. For the declarer it is risk free, and a timely falsecard can reap a huge reward.

The auction was straightforward. With two stoppers in the bid suit, South wasted no time in getting to the desired spot.

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Sports

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 1995 11

Basketball, swimming officials probe unsportsmanlike incidents

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Basketball and swimming events in the country have been temporarily suspended pending investigations by the respective federations following unsportsmanlike events which marred competition during the last week.

Following the suspension of the Ahli Orthodox Under-22 final round basketball match on Aug. 20 when fans and players of both teams broke into a riot at Al Ahli club swimming competitions were put on hold Sunday after referees announced they were pulling out until the Jordan Swimming Federation (JSF) takes the decision to bar Al Orthodox's swimmer Osama Al Halman who had attacked a referee earlier in the week.

So far, the JSF has not taken any decision regarding the swimmer whose club insisted that he continue his participation in the week-long event. Al Orthodox were in the overall lead with 1637 points in the five-club event which has witnessed the toughest competition in years with 10 national records broken.

As for the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF), it meets today (Monday) to reschedule U-22 and women's championship matches which were postponed when Al Orthodox announced they were pulling out of all JBF activities.

JBF's fact-finding committee had failed to show up for a meeting Saturday. JBF Chairman Awwad Haddad said the federation would take the appropriate measures against the players who instigated the fight in its regular meeting Monday and said he hoped another meeting of the committee will have addressed the problems Tuesday.

Al Orthodox's player Mustafa Al Ghoul had attacked the referee during the match. Moments later his teammate Ihab Mab kick-ed Al Ahli's Faisal Nsour. Things went out of control from that moment on and players from both teams got entangled in a fight which JBF officials, referees and Ahli club officials tried to stop. Fans from both sides left the stands and descended on Al Ahli's court which, for two minutes, became a battlefield, helped by total absence of policemen.

The match was halted when Al Ahli were leading 66-57, with 10'45" remaining in the second half. Orthodox's head coach Murad Burak told the referees he was pulling his team out because policemen failed to show up and two of his players had to be taken to hospital.

Al Ahli, needed to win by any score to secure the title, while Al Orthodox needed a 24-point win to keep their title hopes alive.

Maleeva, Rubin in finals

MAHWAH, New Jersey (R) — Bulgaria's Magdalena Maleeva, after three weeks, won the singles title in 1991, but is final. In the final month he final on clay.

Robin, ranked 16th in the world, beat the unseeded Sugiyama 2-6, 6-2, 6-3. Sugiyama, ranked 62nd, had upset top-seeded Conchita Martinez of Spain in the second round.

Novotna, fearful of aggravating a sprained toe, quit midway in a well-played semifinal match with Maleeva.

Maleeva, seeded third, sparked with her service return in an abbreviated 74-minute duel that ended 4-6, 4-3 with Novotna limping off the court for further treatment to the second toe of her right foot.

The 20-year-old Maleeva is seeking to duplicate the title earned here by her sister, Manuela Maleeva-Fagniere, in 1987.

"I'm disappointed because I thought I could win the tournament," said the second-seeded Novotna. "I was worried that I could make it worse by continuing. It was painful and I couldn't run."

Novotna said the injury first flared during a doubles match at Wimbledon this summer.

"I may have to ask for a one-day postponement if I am scheduled for a match Monday," said Novotna, who is seeded fifth at the U.S. Open. "Grand Slams are the most important thing and I want to be ready to play there."

Maleeva played quite well, constantly taking the offence against Novotna.

"I was surprised at how

good she was considering that she has not played since the French Open," Novotna said. "Her returns will make her dangerous at the U.S. Open."

Maleeva rapped a blistering forehand service return winner to score a service break and pull even at 4-4 in the opening set. But Novotna broke back in the ninth game on an angled backhand service return and then held in the 10th.

In the second set, Maleeva moved to a 3-1 lead when Novotna double faulted in the fourth game.

The Bulgarian player held to 4-1 on an ace and a backhand pass after two deuces. It was at this stage that Novotna signalled for a trainer and had her toe taped for support.

Novotna held in the sixth game and broke in the seventh to get back on serve before calling it a day.

Both eyes were on Pankratov for the men's 200

metres butterfly final following his obliteration of the nine-year-old 100 butterfly world record on Wednesday.

The weather, though, had cooled considerably with a heavy downpour of rain in the early afternoon after the hot sunshine of the morning heats, making conditions less hospitable at the open-air Stadionbad pool.

Pankratov, masterly exponent of the newly developing "suhmarine" technique in the opening phase of the race, took the first 200 metres under water and surfaced long after his rivals. He was well clear and inside his own world record schedule at the first turn in the 50-metre pool.

The Russian world champion, leaving his rivals for dead, swam home nearly three seconds ahead of the rest in one minute 56.34 seconds, 1.12 seconds outside the world mark he set in Canet, France, in June.

"It was unfortunately a bit

cold for a world record today," Pankratov said.

"Pankratov doesn't give you a chance on the first length. You can't hold him," Poland's Konrad Galka, silver medallist in 1:59.80, said.

"We're all equal for 35 metres and then I don't know what happens."

Selkov matched Pankratov and Popov by adding the 100 backstroke crown to the 200 title he retained on Thursday, a twin task made easier by the absence of Olympic 200 and world 100 champion Martin Lopez-Zubero of Spain who was sidelined by a back injury.

Victor, in Thursday's 100 freestyle, Popov had no trouble completing the 50 and 100 double he also achieved at the 1992 Olympics, the 1993 Europeans and 1994 worlds.

He won in a championship record 22.25 seconds, way ahead of Christophe Kalfayan of France (22.63) — silver medallist for the second time — and Torsten Span-

neberg of Germany (22.66).

"More and more people are able to stay with me till 35 metres and then they decide to leave me go," Popov said with a smile.

"We're all equal for 35 metres and then I don't know what happens."

Selkov matched Pankratov and Popov by adding the 100 backstroke crown to the 200 title he retained on Thursday, a twin task made easier by the absence of Olympic 200 and world 100 champion Martin Lopez-Zubero of Spain who was sidelined by a back injury.

Victor, like Pankratov and Popov, was in a class of his own and forged away on the second length of the 100 to win in 55.48 seconds from Germany's Jirka Letzin (56.24) and Belgium's Stefaan Maene (56.32).

With one day to go, the Russians lead the title table with 16 golds to 12 for Germany.

Jung just held off fast

finishing defending champion Jana Henke in a German one-two in the women's 800 freestyle, a welcome revival for Jung after she had finished a disappointing sixth behind Van Almsick in Thursday's 400 event.

"I felt lousy after the 400. I didn't want to swim anymore," she said. "I was afraid the same thing would happen in the 800 but my team mates built me up and it worked out well."

Van Almsick had to pull back a big deficit in the medley relay after Hungary had taken charge with a magnificent 1:00.93 opening backstroke leg from Olympic champion Krisztina Egerszegi and maintained the advantage in the breaststroke and butterfly.

But it was easily within Van Almsick's powers and her superb 54.10-second freestyle split gave the Germans victory by more than two seconds.

European Swimming Championships

Russian trio in command; Franzi takes 5th gold

VIENNA (R) — Denis Pankratov, butterfly swimmer supreme, led a golden Russian sweep at the European Championships on Saturday.

Pankratov and fellow world champions Alexander Popov and Vladimir Selkov each completed individual title doubles as Russia swept all three men's golds on the penultimate day of the championships.

Franziska Van Almsick scooped her fifth gold of the week with a superb anchor leg in the women's 4x100 metres medley relay and fellow German Julia Jung, just 15, won the 800 metres freestyle.

Michelle Smith, silver medallist in Tuesday's 400 individual medley, brought Ireland their first gold in the 69-year history of the European Championships with a powerful performance in the women's 200 individual medley.

But all eyes were on Pankratov for the men's 200

metres butterfly final following his obliteration of the nine-year-old 100 butterfly world record on Wednesday.

The weather, though, had cooled considerably with a heavy downpour of rain in the early afternoon after the hot sunshine of the morning heats, making conditions less hospitable at the open-air Stadionbad pool.

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Jung just held off fast

Schumacher wins, Williams protest

SPA FRANCORCHAMPS, Belgium (AFP) — World Champion Michael Schumacher drove a "stupendous race" in his Benetton Renault to win Sunday's weather-plagued Belgian Grand Prix after staving 16th on the grid.

The tribute came from his championship rival Damon Hill — but Hill's Williams Renault team immediately protested against Schu-

macher, reportedly for dangerous driving when Hill was trying to pass him in mid-race.

Schumacher was disqualified after his win here last year because wear to a skid plate under his car was more than regulation limits, and Hill was given the win.

Despite praising his rival's general driving Sunday, Hill said barging into his car had been unacceptable.

Eddie Irvine in the Jordan

Hill, slowed by unlucky

tye choices in the changeable conditions, overhauled Martin Brundle's Ligier Mugen Honda in the closing laps to force through second place. After the race Hill said: "Sorry Martin, I have to have those points."

The result, if upheld, will increase Schumacher's lead in this year's championship to 15 points over Hill.

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U.S. renews Balkan initiative amid clouds

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The United States relaunched its Balkan peace initiative on Sunday but diplomacy was overshadowed by threats of a military offensive by Croatia and a U.N. gamble to protect a Muslim enclave with air power alone.

A reconstituted U.S. team headed for Europe to press the peace plan, but officials admitted they faced a daunting task with only a slim chance of success.

"I do want to say here and now to all the parties that we think the coming week is potentially decisive," Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, who heads the delegation, said in a television interview.

Mr. Holbrooke and fellow negotiators headed for Paris later in the day for talks Monday and Tuesday with the French government and the other members of the five-nation contact group of international mediators: Britain, Germany and Russia.

The U.S. delegation was also to meet Monday in Paris with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, then travel to Belgrade for what Mr. Holbrooke described as "key" talks with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to persuade him to use his influence over Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina to make peace.

"We're not going to make a major concession to get them to the table," Mr. Holbrooke said.

"They are the major obstacle to peace and Belgrade will have to make some very tough decisions in the weeks to come," he added.

The Bosnian Serbs have steadfastly rejected an international peace plan that would grant them 49 per cent of the territory of Bosnia,

with the remaining 51 per cent to remain under the control of the Muslim-Croat alliance headquartered in Sarajevo.

Mr. Holbrooke warned warring Serbs they could face massive North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) reprisals if they fail to accept peace.

"If this peace initiative does not get moving, dramatically moving in the next week or two, the consequences will be very adverse to the Serbian goals," he said.

"One way or another, NATO will be heavily involved," he warned, adding: "This is something that the Serbs would not want."

The U.S. initiative was set back on Aug. 19 when three envoys died in a road accident near the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. Four new officials were appointed last week.

The deaths deflated the initiative's initial momentum and the effort to regain the pace was overshadowed by Croatia's received threat to win back its last Serb-held rebel enclave on its territory by force if necessary.

President Tudjman said Eastern Slavonia would be retaken within months from separatist Serbs who have held it since 1991. If negotiations failed to win the region, a new military offensive would do it, he said.

"We are faced with the task of liberating eastern Slavonia," Mr. Tudjman said in Zagreb on Saturday. "We will quite certainly do this in the coming months either by peaceful means or by a new (military offensive) storm."

Eastern Slavonia, bordering Serbia, is the last part of Croatia in Serb hands after

an army assault in August routed rebel Serbs in most of the sprawling Krajina region.

Mr. Tudjman was showered with glory when he rode a "freedom train" across the reconquered territory on Saturday but he admitted that the region he passed through was a wasteland.

Feted by flag-waving Croatians shouting "Franjo! Franjo!" along the 423-kilometre route, the train symbolised the reification of Croatia after the stunning rout of minority insurgent Serbs.

"This is not just the liberation of land but the creation of a foundation for a free and independent Croatia for centuries to come," he said.

Mr. Tudjman, who emulates his one-time mentor, late Josef Tito, is all but sure to parlay Krajina's defeat into easy reelection next year.

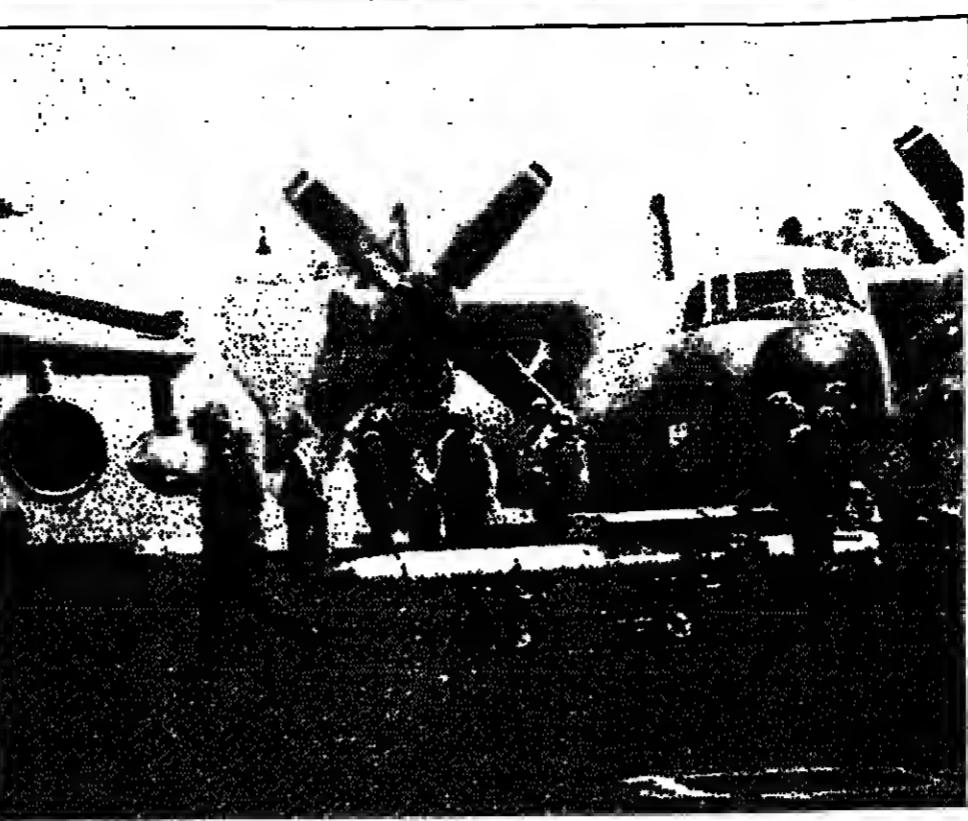
Mr. Holbrooke's peace mission was also being overshadowed by a U.N. gamble to protect the Muslim "safe area" of Gorazde in eastern Bosnia from surrounding Serbs by air power alone.

British U.N. peacekeepers were due to send out a convoy with equipment on Sunday. Only about 80 British soldiers remain in Gorazde and they will be withdrawn by force if necessary.

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'BATTLE READY': American servicemen at work on the flight deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln, which is anchored in the northern Gulf "in high state of readiness" after what the U.S. described as unusual Iraqi military movements (see page one) (AFP photo)

Baghdad resumes power supply to Kurds

BAGHDAD (R) — The Iraqi government in Baghdad has resumed supplying power to the breakaway Kurdish province of Dohuk for the first time in two years, a senior U.N. official said on Sunday.

Diplomats in Baghdad interpreted the move as an attempt to mend fences with the Kurds, now under the protection of an allied "no-fly" zone established at the end of the 1991 Gulf war.

Viktor Wahroos, deputy U.N. coordinator in Iraq, said Dohuk, its villages and towns, were lit by electricity.

"My senior delegate for northern Iraq confirms that power has been flowing to the Dohuk province for over a week from Nineveh governorate," Mr. Wahroos told Reuters.

"I consider this a very positive development," he said.

Baghdad broke off ties with rebel Kurds in 1992 when they decided to hold free elections for a parliament and a regional government away from its authority. Power was cut off from the province in 1993.

Mr. Wahroos said movement of people and commodities were still restricted between government-held areas and the Kurdish region.

He did not say what prompted Baghdad to reconnect Dohuk with the national grid. But he said the measure would help 750,000 Kurds in the province to lessen reliance on scarce and expensive supplies of gas and kerosene.

Other Kurdish provinces, Erbil and Sulaimaniyah, are lit by hydroelectric power under rebel control but U.N. officials say the two provinces witness long daily blackouts.

Iraqi leaders sent an envoy to open talks with the Kurds early this year but the rebels, locked in rivalries and sporadic fighting among themselves, spurned the initiative.

One diplomat said the supply of electricity to Dohuk by the government could be a prelude to the removal of the internal embargo Baghdad placed on the Kurdish region three years ago.

"Trade in particular items is booming. For the Iraqi Kurds it is almost the only means of living," one diplomat said.

He said about 800 Turkish trucks, laden with foodstuffs, crossed Dohuk into the government-held province of Nineveh. Iraqi Kurds control most of the crossing points into Turkey.

COLLUM 100000

Singapore premier leads 30,000-strong workout

SINGAPORE (R) — More than 30,000 Singaporeans, including the island-state's prime minister, took part in a mass workout Sunday, in what organisers said marked a world record for an aerobic event. The participants, who included members of Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong's cabinet and members of parliament, also took part in a 3.3-km (two mile) walk along Singapore's National Heritage Trail. The event was part of a campaign to promote a healthy lifestyle among Singaporeans.

Italy's 'AIDS gang' have imitators

TURIN, Italy (R) — Italy's "AIDS gang," three terminally ill men who brazenly rob banks knowing they cannot be imprisoned under Italian law, have discovered to their dismay that they have imitators. Police said Saturday that a second trio of men claiming to be in the terminal stages of the illness had been arrested after a copycat robbery in the northern city of Turin.

"The AIDS gang has been successfully cloned," Mr. Wahroos told Reuters.

"I consider this a very positive development," he said.

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Winnie Mandela to contest divorce

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Winnie Mandela will contest a divorce action being brought by her husband South African President Nelson Mandela, a Johannesburg newspaper reported Sunday.

The Sunday Independent quoted Mrs. Mandela's lawyer Moses Mavundla as saying her decision could mean that the proceedings would last more than a year.

President Mandela, 77, who has been separated from his wife since April 1992, initiated a formal divorce last week.

His lawyer, Ismail Ayoh, said at the time the divorce would be amicable. The Sunday Independent said it had a letter written on behalf of Mrs. Mandela to her husband last month in which she accused him of wanting to destroy her politically.

The letter said the accusation was based on statements by President Mandela to the couple's daughters. President Mandela fired his wife from her post as deputy minister for arts and culture earlier this year after she ignored instructions to cancel a foreign trip. Neither Mrs. Mandela nor her lawyers could be reached for comment.

Transvestite fools 18 would-be grooms out of dowry

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian man disguised as a woman cheated 18 lonely would-be grooms out of their money by offering to marry them before being accidentally exposed by a child, a newspaper reported Saturday.

Freydun, 26, acting as a poor unhappy woman named Zohreh, would hunt for "naive and lonely" men and lure them into proposing and setting a date for a wedding, the daily Iran said. But he would disappear after persuading the men to pay him a hefty sum for dowry costs, which he said he could not afford. Iranian custom requires young women getting married to acquire some household goods to contribute to their new life.

President Hosni Mubarak has said the Egyptian government knew nothing of massacres against its soldiers until the recent reports from

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel arrests anti-nuclear protesters

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli police detained 10 anti-nuclear protesters who chained themselves to the French and Chinese embassies in Tel Aviv on Sunday, police said. Witnesses at the French embassy said police used water cannons on the protesters' chains and took down a three-metre banner the protesters had hung which said: "Stop nuclear tests." Australia and Japan have led condemnation of China's detonation of a nuclear device on Aug. 17 and France's June announcement that it would resume nuclear tests in the South Pacific in September.

37 killed in week of violence in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — At least 37 people have been killed in the past week in Algeria as security services crack down on armed fundamentalists who themselves were blamed for an attack on civilians in the west of the country, press reports said Sunday.

The daily Liberte reported that 12 people aged between 20 and 45 were brutally murdered a week ago by suspected Islamic militants near Chlef in western Algeria.

The armed men stopped the 12 people — including an imam and a communal guard — at a roadblock and asked them to get off for an identity check before executing them.

Security services revealed later Sunday they had killed 25 armed fundamentalists over the past week in separate swoops, including four in one operation in a western suburb of Algiers.

Algeria has been hit by a spate of brutal murders of civilians in recent weeks as its three-year civil war, sparked by the banning of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in March 1992, continues to rage unabated.

The KDP said the guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) which is waging a bloody separatist campaign against the Turkish government, were driven off after severe fighting with "considerable casualties."

It said the PKK launched their attacks in several districts of the Kurdish self-rule enclave in northern Iraq early Saturday morning.

"There is evidence of some regional interests and instigation behind this blatant PKK attack to undermine" the

On Sunday, the Al Watan daily reported that a booby-trapped lorry blew up Saturday afternoon in Boufarik, 25 kilometres south of Algiers, destroying several homes.

Liberte also reported that a home-made bomb was found hidden in railway tracks near Chlef and defused in time before a train passed.

In early August, a bomb exploded under a train travelling between Medea and Kaar Al Boukhar, in the same region, killing seven people.

Liberte and La Tribune reported on Sunday details of a huge army search operation in Kabylie, east of Algiers, destroying several homes.

Al Watan also said that 29 people were arrested during Wednesday's army sweep in the Algiers Casbah.

They were charged with "being on the lookout, protecting the flight of terrorists after each attack and giving them shelter, food and money" as well as "seeking out potential targets." Al Watan said.

An Israeli tank then drove over the line of men. Mr. Omran said, adding that the tank stopped five persons

peace accord between the KDP and its main Iraqi rival, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), reached under U.S. auspices in Ireland Aug. 9-11, the KDP said in a communiqué.

The statement stressed that the assault "will not distract the KDP leadership from pursuing the peace process to end the year-long PUK-KDP conflict and restore peace and stability" to the troubled Kurdish enclave in northern Iraq.

Five KDP fighters and seven Iraqi Kurdish civilians were killed. KDP Turkey representative Saifeen Dizayee said. A large number of PUK guerrillas died in subsequent fighting, he said.

The KDP launched their attacks in several districts of the Kurdish self-rule enclave in northern Iraq early Saturday morning.

"There is evidence of some regional interests and instigation behind this blatant PKK attack to undermine" the

short of him.

Abdul Salam Musa said he witnessed at least one hundred prisoners killed at the Al Arish camp in the north of the Sinai desert after his artillery unit was captured.

The Israelis divided the prisoners into officers and soldiers. "As soon as the simple soldiers and drafted labourers were lined up, Israeli women soldiers came forward and opened fire on them," Mr. Musa said.

"They were having contests to see who could aim best," he said, adding that remaining prisoners were forced to bury the dead "without saying prayers over them."

Mr. Musa said this happened several times during the three day he was at Al Arish camp, "especially with officers and soldiers from the

Kurdish self-rule zone in northern Iraq, fearing it could mean that the proceedings would last more than a year.

Security sources in the southeastern Turkish city of Diyarbakir said Turkish troops near the Iraqi border were taking measures to prevent PKK members fleeing clashes with the KDP from crossing into Turkey.

The PKK have been exploiting the feuding between the PUK and KDP to launch attacks on Turkey from bases inside the Kurdish enclave.

Turkey has been striving to end the internecine strife in northern Iraq in hopes that the PUK and KDP will reign in their Turkish cousins.

Ankara — like Iran and Syria, which also have Kurdish minorities, as well as Baghdad — are not happy

about the emergence of the Kurdish self-rule zone in northern Iraq, fearing it could mean that the proceedings would last more than a year.

President Mandela, 77, who has been separated from his wife since April 1992, initiated a formal divorce last week.

His lawyer, Ismail Ayoh, said at the time the divorce would be amicable. The Sunday Independent said it had a letter written on behalf of Mrs. Mandela to her husband last month in which she accused him of wanting to destroy her politically.

The self-rule zone in northern Iraq emerged from a "safe haven" for Iraq's rebellious Kurds established after the 1991 Gulf war.

Washington stepped in to mediate an end to the power struggle between the KDP and PUK because that was playing into Baghdad's hands and to prevent Iran intervening in the internecine conflict.

The historian said Israel had kept quiet about the massacres so as not to damage relations with Egypt. The two countries signed a peace treaty in 1979.

The publication of accounts of massacres by Israeli soldiers in the 1956 Suez campaign and the June 1967 war has caused dismay and official embarrassment in

President Hosni Mubarak has said the Egyptian government knew nothing of massacres against its soldiers until the recent reports from

At the conference speech highlighted discussed at the conference, including the women in the society between the teaching, the N Strategy on women

Israel. He called on Israel to bring the authors of the atrocities to trial.